FOUR PAGE SUPPLEMENT.

Workers' Dreadnought

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THE BASIS OF COMMUNISM.

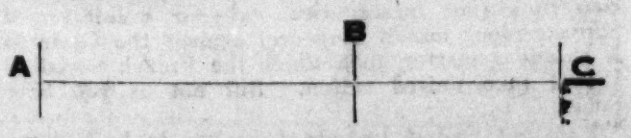
By HERMAN GORTER.

CAPITAL AND LABOUR—*continued.*

The working class must strive to render its own piece as large as possible. The capitalist class, with its staff of governors, officials, officers, priests, lawyers, judges, professors, and so on, must strive to prevent this, and to render the pieces A and B as large as possible. There must necessarily be a struggle between the owners and the manipulators of the means of production, even though this is not yet fully realised by the workers, and has only manifested itself so far in suppressed murmurings and dissatisfaction.

The Hand That Shakes The World.

And the rapid increase of the capitalist portion, which is due to the ever improved means of production, must necessarily render the class struggle always more fierce. This class struggle is very clearly demonstrated by yet another diagram:—



Suppose the line A C to represent the working day a worker has to give to the capitalist. It is evident that during a part of that day he creates a value equalling the value of his wage, during the rest of the day he creates unpaid value, which is profit for the capitalist.

We will take B to be the point of day dividing those two parts. Here, again, the existence of the class struggle is clearly seen. For just as the worker will strive to place the dividing-point nearer to C; in other words, to increase the value he gets for himself, and to lessen the portion B—C, which represents the profit of the capitalists—so the latter strives to lessen the portion of the worker, and to enlarge his own, either through a shortening of A B, or a lengthening of A C, that is to say, by lengthening the working day.

The first figure shows us the class struggle for the quantity of produce, the second for the length of the working-day and the amount of the wage. They both demonstrate the same fact, but from a different point of view.

From both also it is apparent that this is a lasting and irreconcilable war, which is bound to become ever more fierce, and can only be solved through the abolition of private property.

For the unjust inequality results solely from the private ownership of the means of production.

But in what way do you, Communists, propose to put an end to this terrible and shocking state of things? How can you possibly imagine that you will ever manage to abolish an inequality that has grown in the course of centuries and centuries, and that is based on the firmly established, and firmly-rooted private ownership? How will you succeed in abolishing private ownership, sanctioned as it is by the law, sanctified as it is by religion, and protected as it is by the power of the bourgeoisie?

Thus argues many a timorous worker, not daring to join the ranks of the Communists, because he does not yet *understand*.

Communism says to him: I dare to do this, because the capitalist society in which you and I live, is a living organism. I dare to attack capitalist society in its foundations, the private ownership of the means of production ,because in that capitalist society changes take place, and forces are at work, that will destroy it. Forces that have not been purposely started by you, or by me, or by other members of society, but unconscious forces that work behind our back. These I will point out to you, Communism says to the workers, and when you will have seen them, and grasped their meaning, I do not doubt but that you will be my friend and ally.

Here, indeed, we touch upon the primal foundation of Communism. Communism does not teach, as hitherto Socialist tendencies have ever done, that the abolition of private ownership, the transformation of society into a Socialist co-operative community, without wage slavery, without exploitation, will be brought about in the first place through the will of man. Communism teaches that in the first place the blind forces at work in a society will render capitalism impossible, and Socialism possible, and inevitable.

The foremost difference between Communism and the bourgeoisie, and Anarchism, and the conservative and reactionary elements among the workers themselves is that Communism teaches that the first factor for a new society must inevitably be based on the material foundation of that society—so much so, that if that material foundation should be wanting, no human effort in the world will ever be able to make the new society.

By the material foundation of society, Communism means labour, the process of production. Every worker will agree that this is the basis of society.

And Communism points out that in that process changes are taking place, and forces are at work, that render capitalism impossible—Socialism inevitable, and possible.

This bringing forward of the material foundation by Communism, however, is not to be interpreted so as to mean that if only those unconscious forces transform the process of production in the direction of Socialism, this Socialism will come of its own accord. This were a malicious and false interpretation of Communism; it is frequently brought forward by the bourgeoisie, and especially by the church in an attempt to prove her own spiritual superiority, by spreading this lie about the materialism of the Communist doctrine. This representation, however, is nothing but a miserable lie. If we consider the material change in the process of production to be the principal, the foremost factor, for the coming of Socialism, we do not mean to imply that there are no other factors. We do not mean to say that the entire process is purely material, and mechanical, and unconscious. If we did, why should we trouble ourselves about propaganda and organisation as much as we do?

All we say is this: If the change in the process of production under capitalism were not such that Socialism became possible, not one man, nor any number of men, would ever be able to bring about Socialism. If the foundation of society, that is to say, labour, had not begun to adopt a Socialistic character under capitalism, and through capitalism, no Socialism would be possible.

But, only mankind, by its own will, its thoughts, its desires, and deeds, can bring about Socialism.

If the basis of society, the process of production, changes towards Socialism, it is man, the living being, the human mind and will, that must erect the Socialist edifice on that foundation. Man can do nothing without materials. But no building materials will grow into a house without the help of man.

The Soldier. **The Administrator.**

This is what we wish to point out in the first place. We wish to convince the workers that firstly, the things in the present society have become such that they force us towards Socialism, that they claim Socialism, as it were. And secondly, the people are available who must and can erect Socialism on these foundations.

Our first argument, therefore, will be divided in two: it will treat of things and people. We will take the things first; these, as we have observed, must form the beginning, as the foundations constitute the beginning of a house.

(To be continued.)

REALITY.

For one soul saved from wreck so many lost;
For one fair flower so many loathsome weeds;
For one calm sea so many tempest-tossed;
One act of love so many hateful deeds.

For one slight ray of hope a million fears;
One day of peace long bitter years of strife;
One hollow laugh a thousand genuine tears;
Such is the grim reality of life.

HUGH HOPE.

ORIGINAL DEFECTIVE.

ROSA LUXEMBURG AND LEO YOGICHES.

From Personal Memories. By I. MARCHLEVSKI (Karski).

PART II.—*continued.*

On escaping from Poland Leo Logiches Tyszka at once turned to work, and led the foreign group, which again gained in importance in proportion as the counter-revolution in Poland and all Russia got the upper hand. I met him again in London at the Congress of the Social-Democratic Party of Russia in the summer of 1907. There was a struggle against the Mensheviki, and Tyskza, who all these years had still kept in touch with the Russian comrades, took his place naturally as the leader of the Polish group. He was *au courant*, to the minutest details, in respect of all Russian affairs, and took the most active share in the complicated work which had to be carried on at the Congress, in which "intrigues" led to extraordinary confusions. In such cases he showed himself a "diplomat" who followed his plan persistently and decisively; only this "diplomacy" never departed a step from the severe revolutionary lines. For this he was by no means loved by the Mensheviki and Leagueists. At the same time, too, there was strife with the Bolshevik comrades, with whom we did not see eye to eye on questions of organisation. But thanks to Tyskza's management, the relations between the Bolsheviki and the Polish group were always satisfactory.

From 1907, Rosa Luxemburg had to give herself wholly to German affairs. That fateful period was approaching in which, to all appearances, all was in order in the Party, but in fact, the Party was rotting at its root. It appeared as if the Radical tendency had conquered, the Party Congresses passed very Radical resolutions, but whoever could see, saw that this Radicalism in reality was worse than any opportunism: in the Party contradictory tendencies were developing; a Party Bureaucracy was spreading to unheard-of dimensions; there was a Radical catchword, there was no revolutionary spirit. Against this fact, which led in the event to the moral catastrophe of the Party on August 4th, 1914, it was very difficult to struggle. Of the more influential leaders, Bebel had lost his former revolutionary sensibility. Karl Kautsky, who had never kept in touch with the life of the Party, fell ever more into pedantic dogmatism. The new men among the Radical ranks—all those Scheidemanns, Eberts, Haases—were never inwardly revolutionaries, and saw no farther than their own noses; the rest were simply common aspirants to position. It is not astonishing that in such an atmosphere the leaders contrived to put down Rosa Luxemburg, ever ringing her storm-bells, and those of her way of thinking, as fault-finding critics who were destroying peace in the Party out of mere "greed for intrigue." To this tendency Kautsky, too, eventually gave way, and his posture in the year 1912 led to the breach of a friendship of many years. This bookworm, weak in character, ventured in the end to call Rosa Luxemburg and her adherents "Anarcho-Syndicalists."

In spite of this nerve-trying fight, Rosa found time in those years for profound scientific work. She was appointed teacher of National Economy in the Party's school, and showed herself not only a pattern pedagogue, but composed while preparing her lectures with extreme consciousness, an excellent guide to Marxian political economy, a guide which, unhappily, has not appeared in print. (It is to be feared that the bandits of Noske, who intruded into her home during the fateful January days, have destroyed this, as also many other manuscripts.) At that time, too, another great work of Rosa Luxemburg was published, *The Accumulation of Capital.*

At the same time, these years were also the most fruitful of her activity in agitation. The hue and cry against Rosa Luxemburg on the side of the Party leaders had no effect on the masses: in all towns, even in the centres of Revisionism, the workers loved to hear "our Rosa," and her entrancing gift of rhetoric moved even the workers affected by opportunism.

I remember that a comrade (I think, a Mannheim man) related how a speech of Rosa Luxemburg's proved quite astonishing in its effects: the workers declared to their leaders that they now saw how they had been deceived by them, and demanded that Rosa Luxemburg should be invited to deliver a whole course of lectures, with discussions on party questions. There were many such examples.

In the year 1913, Rosa Luxemburg delivered a speech at Frankfurt-on-Main against militarism: for this speech she was summonsed, and condemned to a year's imprisonment. But even while her appeal to a higher Court was pending, she delivered an address in Berlin, in which, among other things, she said that every day in the German barracks inhuman tyrannies and ignominies were committed upon the soldiers. For this she was again summonsed. The defence undertook to produce proof of the words complained of, and called for witnesses through the party papers. The case came on in June, 1914, a couple of weeks before the outbreak of the world-war; on the first day of the hearing some hundreds of witnesses appeared before the court, to prove the horrors of the barracks, and the lawyer for the defence declared that some thousands of such witnesses had reported themselves to him. The Government took fright; the case was adjourned, and never afterwards resumed.

Comrade Tyszka worked, in these years, in the Polish and Russian Party in Warsaw. A legal weekly paper began to be published, but, as all party-writers had to emigrate, the editing was conducted from Berlin; and at its head, naturally, Tyszka appeared. He lived at that time in Berlin-Steglitz, in a hotel, and Franz Mehring, who had a minute knowledge of the history of Prussia, made the discovery that this hotel had once been the palace of General Vrangel, the suppressor of the revolution of 1848. Every time the old man saw Tyszka, he assured him that Vrangel would certainly turn in his grave at the thought of such a revolutionary housed in his old chambers. In a small room of this hotel our editing went on, and Tyszka introduced a severe order again, and stormed, as he could, when the work did not go its ordinary routine. To edit from Berlin the organ in Warsaw could only be accomplished by a model of precision, and the literary staff were in this respect worth desperately little. Alone, thanks to Tyszka's energy, and in spite of the continued suppression of the paper, which ever afresh began to appear under another name, the thing still went on; it existed about a year, during which it changed its name seven times.

Tyszka had to work in the Russian Party, because he had been appointed to the Central Committee of the Polish Party, which had entered as a federal part into the old Russian Party, and, as he was minute to pedantry in his work, and considered it necessary to make reports on all that had to do with the general business of the Party to the Polish party-leaders who assembled periodically in Berlin, he was compelled to carry on a whole Chancery, to do it in his own person, and this under intolerably difficult conditions: he lived under a foreign passport; at any moment the police might pop up, asking why the "Chancery" was carried or in the houses of German comrades, where the documents were kept; for the correspondence there were addresses of other Germans. We once reckoned that Tyszka, in this way, had to do with quite a dozen houses. For conspiracy considerations he did not depart from this system: according to his assurance the documents were so managed that, even if one of the houses were discovered, the police would have found only a small part of them, with which they could have effected no prosecution. I asked him once what would happen if he should become ill, since nobody would know how to find his way out of such a mess. The answer was simple: "I can't become ill." In fact, the astonishing energy and the iron health alone of Comrade Tyszka enabled him to cope with the mass of work which he took upon himself.

(To be continued.)

A BLACK MAN REPLIES.

Dear Editor: The following letter, replying to E. D. Morel's article on the black troops in Germany, was sent to the *Daily Herald* on April 11th, but apparently the *Herald* refuses a hearing to the other side, which is quite inarticulate:—

The Editor of the *Daily Herald.*

Sir: The odiousness of your article headlined "Black Scourge in Europe; Sexual Horror let loose" is not mitigated by your explanatory editorial and note stating that you are not encouraging race prejudice and that you champion native rights in Africa. If you are really consistent in thinking that you can do something to help the white and black peoples to a better understanding of each other, there is much that you might learn from Liberal and Conservative organs like *The Nation*, *The New Statesman* and the *Edinburgh Review*, which have treated the problem (exposing the iniquities practised upon the natives and showing up the shortcomings of the latter) in a decent and dignified manner.

Your correspondent, who peddles his books and articles on "the poor, suffering black," is quite worked up over the African warriors carrying off prizes of war like the heads and eyes of their victims. But, verily, trophies of war are trophies of war, whether they are human works of art like paintings and sculpture, or nature's like man's hands and heads. I am quite ignorant of the "well-known physiological reasons that make the raping of a white woman by a negro resultful of serious and fatal injury" Any violent act of rape, whether by white, yellow or black, civilised or savage man, must entail injury, serious or fatal, especially if the victim be a virgin. The worst case of rape I ever heard of took place in Kansas City some eight years ago; the woman was white, the perpetrators three white men, and the result was well-nigh fatal. In the West Indies there have been many instances of white soldiers raping coloured women with awful consequences. Your correspondent employs the same methods used by the German propagandists during the War without any real effect. England, France, even America, all used their black troops in the War. Surely the *Daily Herald*, by the light of experience, ought to find a more effective and honest way of combating a grave evil.

Why all this obscene, maniacal outburst about the sex vitality of black men in a proletarian paper? You might say the negro is oversexed; the same statement may be made of the Italians and Jews of the Caucasian race. To say that the black man is "sexually unrestrainable" is palpably false. I, a full-blooded negro, can control my sexual proclivities when I care to, and I am endowed with my full share of the primitive passion. Besides, I know of hundreds of negroes of the Americas and Africa who can do likewise. When white men go among coloured races they do not take their women with them; hence the hundreds of mulattos, octoroons and eurasians disowned of the Caucasian race.

During my stay in Europe, I have come in contact with many weak and lascivious persons of both sexes, but I do not argue from my experience that the English race is degenerate. On the other hand, I have known some of the finest and cleanest types of men and women among the Anglo-Saxons.

If the black troops are syphilitic, they have been contaminated by the white world. According to competent white invesigators, syphilis is a disease peculiar to white and yellow peoples; where it is known among the blacks it has been carried thither by the whites. Houses of prostitution have always been maintained, officially or otherwise, for soldiers. They were a notorious fact during the late War. I think the key to your exposure may be found in your excerpt from *Clarte*, which states that "German girls of barely marriageable age sell themselves because 20 francs are worth 150 marks, and 50 francs 400 marks." In this intolerable age the great majority of peoples, male and female, in different ways, is more or less given to prostitution. The stopping of French exploitation and use of the North African conscripts (not mercenaries, as your well-informed correspondent insists they are) against the Germans is clearly a matter upon which the French Socialists should take united action. But not as you have done.

I do not protest because I happen to be a negro (I am disgusted when I read in your columns that the white dockers would prohibit their employers using Chinese and Indian labour), I write because I feel that the ultimate result of your propaganda will be further strife and blood-spilling between the whites and the many members of my race, boycotted economically and socially, who have been dumped down on the English docks since the ending of the European War. I have been told in Limehouse by white men, who ought to know, that this summer will see a recrudescence of the outbreaks that occurred last year. The negro-baiting Bourbons of the United States will thank you, and the proletarian underworld of London will certainly gloat over the scoop of the Christian-Socialist-pacifist *Daily Herald.*

Yours etc.,
CLAUDE MCKAY.

In order to save expense to Comrades, both in town and country, who cannot obtain the "Dreadnought" from a neighbouring newsagent, we have decided to reduce the rates for future subscriptions and to send the paper POST FREE to any address in the United Kingdom for

2/3 for THREE months,
4/6 for SIX months,
and 8/6 for a YEAR'Ssubscription.

IRELAND AND THE GOVERNMENT.

On Monday, the appeal of the Irish Trade Union Congress for a general strike to secure the release of the Irish hunger strikers appeared in the press.

The same day in the House of Commons it was announced that four more Irish M.P.'s had been arrested. Mr. Denis Henry, the Irish Attorney-General, stated in reply to questions, that the 89 Sinn Fein prisoners were on hunger strike in Mountjoy, and that there were 151 such prisoners, only 70 of whom had been tried and sentenced. All the hunger-strikers were by this time weak, and some were "nearing the danger zone." He added that the chairman of the Mountjoy visiting justices had telegraphed to the Lord Lieutenant, who had replied:—

"There is no power under the rules made in November last to extend ameliorative treatment to convicted prisoners, who are excluded from ameliorative treatment. Untried prisoners are treated under the rules for untried prisoners. His Excellency does not propose to modify the rules in the direction you suggest. All prisoners on hunger strike have been forwarned as to the consequences of persistence in their conduct, in accordance with the decision of His Majesty's Government."

This pompous utterance, one of the many utterances that show the absurdity of pretending that ours is a democratic country, was soon to be reversed.

Mr. MacVeagh, an Irish Nationalist, then reported that the visiting surgeon at Mountjoy had resigned as a protest, that the whole of the medical staff had called for the release of the hunger strikers, and that the Lord Mayor of Dublin had been refused admission to the prison.

Government Preparations to Break Strike.

Lieut.-Colonel Malone read the following letter which had been sent officially to the Ex-Officers' National Union:—

"Dear Sir: Thank you for offering to assist should any national emergency occur. Preparations are being made in case the food supply is cut off. I shall be glad if you will fill in and return the enclosed form so that you may be allotted a position. A telegram will be made out so that in the event of any emergency you can be called immediately .Any alteration of address should be sent to me as soon as possible. Yours faithfully, G. H. HORNE, Major.

The following questions were also put:—

"Are you able to drive a railway engine?

"Have you had any railway experience?

"Are you able to take charge of a power station?

"Are you able to drive a motor-car or cycle?

"Have you had any clerical experience?

"Did you assist in the last strike? If so, please say how."

Colonel Malone observed that he had given notice of a question to the War Office on this matter, but had been informed that the Secretary of State for War was in France "*in connection with the industrial trouble in the Ruhr Valley.*"

Putting down the Workers' Revolution in the Ruhr Valley is quite openly a part of the business of the War Department of our Capitalist Government; yet some people think we shall secure Communism by peaceful persuasion!

Malone added that the circular meant "the using of a force of White Guards, such as has been raised in the European countries in which there has been civil war. That means civil war . . . The organisation of White Guards in England will only provoke the workers to organise and drill a Red Army."

Not Red but Green Guards.

It should be noticed that the Sinn Fein troops are not Red troops; they are not fighting for Communism, but for national independence. Communists desire self-determination for all peoples, but they desire also a greater thing—the abolition of Capitalism, without which there can be no real self-determination. Poland, Czecho-Slovakia and the other new states, to which the Allies have nominally granted independence, are, actually, by no means independent, but are under the perpetual domination of the Allies. But even if the grant of independence within the Capitalist system could ever mean genuine independence to small countries like Ireland, the workers could never be emancipated so long as they remained under the rule of their native Capitalists. The Sinn Feiners are not fighting for a Workers' Republic, but an Irish Republic; they are not Red Guards, but Green Guards.

The General Strike and the Galway Soviet.

Nevertheless, the idea of a Workers' Republic and the establishment of Communism has taken root amongst some sections of Irish workers; therefore, when the general strike took place on April 13th, according to programme, we learn that in Galway a Workers' Council was set up to control the City during the strike. The Soviet is so practical; so essentially the organism natural to the workers' control of society that it invariably springs into being when the Capitalist system gets out of gear for any reason.

Irish Land Seizures and Sinn Fein Courts.

April 13th: in pleading for the Irish hunger strikers, T. P. O'Connor declared that the Irish Land Department had been put out of business. It had made its plans to break up the large grazing tracts under the Irish Small Holdings Acts, but the Department officials were ordered away by the people, "and the land is being distributed, not under the law of the country, not by the officials at Dublin Castle, but by the people themselves."

"In many parts of Ireland the British Government has ceased to govern, and Ireland is under another government. In some parts of the country professional men, like lawyers, have lost all their business, because there are Sinn Fein courts which hear cases, give decisions, and inflict sentences—perhaps 'sentences' is not the word, but verdicts—and the decisions of these courts are accepted by the people. Therefore, there is no room for any lawyers there, or litigants in His Majesty's Courts."

This development is of very great importance. It shows that the Irish Revolution, though its main object is, as yet, a mere bourgeois political freedom, is striking deep, and affecting fundamental economic and social relationships. To Irish Communists the situation opens great possibilities; they must be ever vigilant in urging the complete abolition of Capitalism and the setting up of the Soviets.

The Irish workers have a splendid audacity, born of their long strife with governments, which will lead them far. We regret that the great masses are still so much influenced by their Church, which, like all the other Churches, stands for the maintenance of private property and the established social order.

The Sinn Fein movement at present draws support from two opposing forces; small Capitalists and would-be Capitalists who wish to become big Capitalists by erecting tariff walls to protect Irish industries, and exploited workers who are groaning under the oppression of Capitalism itself.

Perhaps, still in ignorance that the general strike was so successful, Bonar Law, on April 13th, told the House of Commons that the Government had "no intention" of discontinuing its practice of prisoning Irish people on mere suspicion. He added that, whilst the Government would "greatly deplore deaths occurring by people committing suicide, it would not do to give the impression that political action in Parliament would alter the Government's decision. "It would be perfectly futile," he said, "if men are to be released because they refuse food."

And yet next day the hunger strikers were released!

Clynes Catching Irish Votes.

J. R. Clynes, who is such a determined opponent of political strikes when the workers are engaged in any economic working-class struggle, has had no word of condemnation for the Irish strike. In his constituency there is a large proportion of Irish voters, therefore he has of late spoken frequently on Irish affairs, but in spite of his denunciations of the Government, his utterances could hardly be satisfactory to his Irish constituents if they read the verbatim reports in Hansard. For instance, on April 13th, he said:—

"My point is that, *while it may be right for the Government to arrest these men because they are suspected of wrong-doing*, and because convictions may not be obtainable, the Government ought not to put them under the conditions of degradation and personal punishment usually meted out to men against whom crimes have been proven."

All the Members of Pariament who urged that the Irish hunger strikers should not be allowed to die simply pleaded that they should be granted better prison treatment. But whilst the hunger strikers may have said that their strike was to secure better treatment, the terrible task they set themselves was of course undertaken to spur on the Irish masses to further agitation for independence, and in the hope of forcing a way out of prison in order that they might work for their cause outside. Their faith has been justified by the general strike of Irish workers, which has also secured their release.

Sexton Betrayer.

James Sexton, of the Liverpool Dockers' Union, an Irishman himself, by the way, and one of the most reactionary men in the Labour Party, also made a pretence of pleading for the lives of the hunger strikers, but revealed the fact that he was working, and with some success, against, the general strike. He said:—

"If the strike which is going on in Ireland to-day continues, the Belfast Orangemen will also participate in the protest which has been made by the Irish Trade Unionists. *That is a very serious situation.* . . .

"*What I am concerned about more than anything else is that industrial peace in England and Ireland should prevail.* I am very much afraid that if something is not done there will be not merely a one-day strike in Ireland, and that it will not be confined to Ireland. The Union which I represent has 10,000 members in Ireland, every one of them amenable to the law of a Union with headquarters in this country. *So far we have been able to restrain them and to carry on work.* . . . As I have just said, I have advices in my pocket from Belfast that north of Ireland Orangemen and Catholics are joining together to make this protest."

The Liverpool dockers passed a resolution to join the strike, but it terminated too quickly for them to carry out their intention. We are not by any means certain that they would have done so, and we assume that Sexton would have tried to pacify them.

At the same time, the fact that J. H. Thomas was in Ireland during the strike and took no open part against it seems to indicate that the Labour Party will make greater concessions than hitherto to Sinn Fein voters, and will even back political strikers when they are Green and not Red.

On April 14th, the majority of the hunger strikers were released and the strike called off. Bonar Law read an ambiguous statement evidently prepared by the officials before the release. It said that convicted prisoners were not entitled to ameliorative treatment except under the rules dated November 22nd, 1919, and that prisoners arrested by the Competent Military Authority would get ameliorative treatment.

The Terms of Release.

As the hunger strikers were released they were asked to sign an undertaking, but only one of them did so, and he under a misapprehension. Nevertheless, on April 15th, Bonar Law stated that he had received the following message from the Viceroy:—

"Following the precedent of O'Brien, authority was given to the Governor of Mountjoy Prison to liberate any prisoner awaiting trial or deportation, who was certified by doctors to be in imminent danger of death, and requiring treatment which could not be given in prison. Under this order 66 prisoners have been released on parole for a period which differs in each case according to the particular need. I should expressly tell you that mistakes have been made by the prison authorities. Some of these 66 are men who had been convicted and who are serving sentences, and are in no case entitled to be released on parole. I think this should be expressly made known so that such action will not form a precedent. The whole action taken in regard to hunger strikers was based upon the decision in regard to amelioration. Release on parole was never intended to apply to cases of men who were convicted after trial."

The story that the prison authorities released convicted prisoners by mistake is concocted to save the Government's face. The fact is that the general strike made it imperative to release the prisoners at once. The strike would not have terminated on the release of the untried prisoners if the convicted hunger strikers had remained in prison.

Knowing the methods of the Government, we felt quite sure that the prisoners would not be unconditionally released, and that they would presently find themselves taken back to prison on the cat and mouse principle, if not actually under the Cat and Mouse Act.

More strikes, and probably many more strikes, will, we think, be needed before the prisoners secure an unconditional release. And if this batch of prisoners should be released another will follow.

The Irish are a fighting race and are adepts at stirring up an agitation, but if we may presume to offer a word of advice on mere fighting tactics, it is: do not allow your agitation to be side-tracked into getting better conditions for prisoners, or a mere struggle to keep people out of prison.

To our Communist comrades we cannot too earnestly say: Sinn Fein will continue to work for nationalism; your business is to struggle for Communism.

STUDENTS AND COMMUNISM.

The influence of the Left Wing movement made itself strongly felt in the annual conference of the University Socialist Federation at Guildford, on April 9th to 12th. Controversy centred on the Soviets and dictatorship of the proletariat; Brailsford came down and spoke on "Parliament or Soviets," and Gallagher on "New Tendencies in the British Labour Movement"; and as a result of the discussion, a new Socialist basis was adopted to meet the claims of the Left Wing. Even the motion for full Communist affiliation received a one-third vote. Gallagher attended the conference all through, and his presence was a great stimulus.

The University Socialist Federation unites the Socialist students' societies in the different universities. It has a present membership of six to seven hundred in fourteen centres, and its members are now increasing at a tremendous pace. It is only a loose federation of societies and not a separate Socialist party (which would be obviously undesirable, since it would imply separation from non-university Socialists), and therefore it cannot run a special policy or do more than bring Socialist students together on broad, common principles. But the experience of the Geneva International Conference (reported in the *Dreadnought* last January) at which the Federation found its position liable to be misinterpreted as hostile to Communism, or even neutral in the class war, at once convinced the mass of the members that immediate steps must be taken to alter the constitution so as to clear away any suspicion of "majoritaire" Socialism of the kind that only talks about Socialism and is against the revolution when the revolution comes. Therefore the following basis was adopted by the necessary two-thirds majority:—

"The U.S.F. consists of students and ex-students who wish to work for the abolition of the Capitalist system, by which the mass of the population is held in economic subjection to a small property-controlling class, and its replacement by a system of communal ownership and workers' control.

"Recognising that for this purpose the workers must unite and displace the present controlling class and substitute their own administration, the Federation aims at assisting its members to take their place in the revolutionary working-class movement directed to this end."

The adoption of the basis marks a distinct advance for the U.S.F. (up to a few years ago university Socialist societies used to be formed on the Fabian basis!), and makes it possible for the Communists to continue at work within the Federation instead of finding it necessary to sever their connection. A further resolution was passed pledging members not to oppose the dictatorship of the proletariat in the event of a revolution, although the stronger demand, calling on members to work immediately for the dictatorship, was just lost by two votes. R.P.D.

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THE OVERSEAS CREDIT SCHEME.

On April 12th, the Government introduced and secured agreement to a motion authorising the grant of credits up to £26,000,000 to assist British trade overseas.

Of course, this is to aid private Capitalist trading by individuals. It should be noticed here that the workers are held in economic slavery all their lives. If, when they are unable for any reason to earn the wherewithal to maintain themselves, they apply to the community for aid, they are regarded as tiresome paupers and put off with a mere pittance, even when they have been disabled in the Army or other Government service. The workers have to submit to this because, living under the Capitalist system, they work for others, since they have not the wherewithal to employ others to work for them.

More Capital for the Capitalists.

But now it is becoming the custom for the Government, by one means or other, to provide certain persons with capital, with which they build up private fortunes for themselves.

The Government of India has for some time past been lending capital on very easy terms to those who wish to exploit the Indian workers. The home Government did the same for a number of firms in Britain during the War; for instance, the Cellulose Company.

And now comes this £26,000,000 scheme. Already credits of £299,000 have been granted, £18,000 of which has already been paid out and a further £1,250,000 has been provisionally promised. The scheme is to continue for six years. After which, if the Capitalists intend, it is to be renewed.

The information which the Government has consented to disclose as to the working of the proposal is most scanty. Members of Parliament who asked for further information were snubbed and told that a Bill would be introduced shortly, and that the scheme was explained in the *Board of Trade Journal*, but no details are given there. Either the Government has not fully made up its mind as to the precise working of the scheme, or it does not wish the scheme to be fully understood.

A Memorandum issued by the Government explains that the credits are to bear interest at the rate of 1 per cent. above Bank of England rate with a minimum of 6 per cent. per annum (but the buyer, not the Capitalist, is to pay it), and the Board of Trade is to undertake insurance against abnormal risks in overseas trading. It is made clear that any loss is to be made good by Parliament. Things are always managed like that because the Capitalist class is in control. The War was a means of making the Capitalists richer: they sold their wares to the Government and to us all at exorbitant prices, they lent their superfluous money to the Government at higher interest than governments have ever paid before and were called patriots for that service; they secured that the peace terms should provide them with opportunities to make still greater fortunes out of oil, rubber, and other raw materials, and also out of docile native labour. They have now insisted upon this credit and insurance scheme in order that they may secure increased opportunities of trade as a result of the War without running any of the risks that the War has produced.

The Resolution agreed to by Parliament authorised the grant of credits up to £26.000,000 "*and of any expenses incurred by the Board of Trade in connection with the granting of such credits and the undertaking of insurances, so far as more expenses are not defrayed out of sums received by the Board by way of commission in respect of credits, or by way of premiums in respect of insurance.*"

The Government has thus obtained the power to spend more than the £26,000,000 under the title of Board of Trade expenses and insurances. In any case, the Government will not hesitate to come back to Parliament for money if the £26,000,000 is not enough, and Parliament will be complacent, as usual, for the Members of Parliament and the interests they represent desire public money to be spent in this way. This is a business Government, and a business Parliament.

Enslaving the Small States.

The scheme, so far as it has been explained, appears to be to assist British Capitalists to sell goods in the countries which are now on the verge of bankruptcy where the money of the country is worth much less than British money. According to Sir W. Rutherford, who poses as an authority on these matters, the plan is that the poor foreign buyer will give a promise to pay for the goods in the future, and on the strength of that promise, the British Government will pay over the cash value of the goods to the British Capitalist who is selling them, the Government waiting to recover the money until the foreigner is in a position to pay. Sir W. Rutherford said that if that was not the Government scheme, it ought to be.

Mr. Bridgman, Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade, put the matter rather differently. He said:—

"*The purchaser in a foreign country has to take up a Bill of Lading, and make a deposit with an agent approved by us in the currency of the country, calculated on the basis of the exchange, plus a margin which has been stated roughly at 15 per cent., which will have to be maintained. They will have to pay interest at one point above Bank Rate. . . . .Those who get the advances made to them—the sellers in this country—have to pay a commission.*"

No one seems to know whether the deposit paid by the foreign buyer is the cash value of the goods at the present exchange rate and it is simply kept in the foreign country in order that the foreigner may get something back if the money of his country increases in value, or whether the foreigner only deposits securities and a portion of the money now. In any case, the British trader is secured; the foreigner gets more deeply into debt and ultimately has to pay 15 per cent. more for the goods than they were worth and at least 6 per cent interest on their price. Sir Frederick Banbury seemed to think that the foreigner would have to pay at the present exchange rate even if the value of his money afterwards increases.

The British Capitalists will apply to the Board of Trade for these credits, and all sorts of bribery and corruption is sure to result. Mr. Sugden, on behalf of the Lancashire cotton trade, declared that £26,000,000 was not enough, and it is obvious that traders are clamouring for these credits for their own personal benefit and in the hope that they will secure for British traders the monopoly of many markets.

The countries in which these credits have already been applied, according to the *Board of Trade Journal*, are Finland, the Baltic Provinces, and certain other parts of Russia (not Soviet, of course), Poland, Roumania, Czecho-Slovakia and Jugo-Slavia. The scheme, according to the Government memorandum, seems to have originated largely because private enterprise in the summer of 1919 was not prepared to ensure trade with South-Eastern Europe: doubtless such trade was regarded as too precarious on account of the Bolshevik Revolution.

The British Capitalist intends that he shall benefit most from this scheme. The many examples prove that the small nations in which such credits are accepted will lose all genuine independence, and will become mere vassals of Britain; already the Allies have a strong grip upon them. Lord Robert Cecil and others are already demanding that on the strength of these credits, regulations concerning the tariffs, imports and exports, and armies of those countries shall be imposed by Britain.

Killing Bolshevism by Trade.

Nevertheless, it is argued that countries now on the verge of bankruptcy and starvation will be saved by these credits from a complete breakdown of their economic system. Communists view such a prospect without dismay, for the breakdown of their Capitalist economic system would precipitate the Workers' Revolution and make Communism the only alternative.

The British Government has openly avowed its intention to kill Bolshevism by trade. This scheme is doubtless one of the measures thereto.

In the States bordering on Russia; Esthonia and the others in the Baltic, and various others in the South—States in which these credits are to be applied—Communism has developed later than in Central Russia. When Soviet Russia was at Brest Litovsk, the Ukrainian delegates made peace with German Imperialism behind the back of the Soviet delegates on the promise that Germany would protect the landlords and Capitalists of the Ukraine from their workers and peasants, who were striving to gain the power and to establish Soviet rule. The Esthonian Government is a coalition of buorgeois and Second International Social-Patriots. It dissolved the Esthonian Trade Union Congress and imprisoned the delegates for passing Communist resolutions.

The governments of the Russian border States have tardily come to recognise that they must make peace with Soviet Russia, because the Allies have not provided the means necessary to remain at war. But whilst Capitalism maintains itself in the border States, their Capitalist Governments will remain hostile to Soviet Russia; they will always be waiting an opportunity to strike at the Workers' Republic.

In the interests of Communism it is necessary that these Governments should be brought to ruin. When Communism and the Soviets replace them, the border States will certainly federate with Soviet Russia, if they do not actually merge themselves in the Russian Republic. All national boundaries will become less marked when Communism replaces competitive Capitalism.

Col. Malone on the Credit Scheme.

All this is so obvious that it seems almost unnecessary to state it. Yet in the Overseas Credit debate on April 12th, Colonel Malone, one of those visitors to Russia who, on returning, have identified themselves with the "Hands off Russia" movement, made the following observations, which display a complete failure to realise the International class struggle in which Soviet Russia, the champion of Communism and the working-class, is opposed by all the Capitalist governments in the world.

Colonel Malone said:—

I am not opposed in the least to measures for the re-construction of those countries in the South of Russia where re-construction is so urgently required, but surely it is not a question for one nation to deal with by herself. . . . surely, if we are going to supply money to purchase rolling stock, machinery, or other requirements, there ought to be some co-ordination amongst the Great Powers undertaking the work. . . . Would it not be better for these measures to be directed by the Central Economic Council, or preferably, perhaps, by a Committee of the League of Nations?

Has Colonel Malone still failed to realise that the Capitalist League of Nations will be a League dominated by Britain and America, or by Britain if America remains outside; that in any case it will be the instrument of predatory Capitalism and a strong force against the Workers' Revolution?

He continued:—

This measure ought to be dealt with on a much wider scale than that on which . . . this credit is to be administered. . . . Is Siberia to be included amongst the countries to which this credit is to be supplied, and if not, why not?

We were informed last session that credit was to be supplied to the south-east part of Russia. *I am sure it is not the intention to trade with the Bolsheviks, but politically, there is no objection to trading with Siberia.*

What does this mean; is it intended for sarcasm?

In my judgment, the whole matter ought to be dealt with from a much wider and more fundamental point of view. It would be much better to provide credits, not for this or that firm which happen to get the ear of the Board of Trade, or some other

Department, but to the governments responsible for administering those States. But before that can be done, those countries must be recognised. May I call attention to their position? The boundaries of Poland have not been defined, and the political condition is still very unstable. . . . Esthonia, abounding in riches, has been recognised *de facto*, but not *de jure*. She has been recognised by Italy. Italy, being a democratic country, had the foresight to see the need for stabilising all these smaller States and putting them on a firm basis. *Before we supply money to these countries to assist them to build up their industries, we should recognise them "de facto" and "de jure."*

Look at it again from a business point of view. We are supplying many millions of the British taxpayers' money to a country which has not been recognised by us.

Communism to be checked.

It may be absorbed by Soviet Russia, or these countries may amalgamate with one another. Political conditions may occur which may upset the whole commercial and economic stability, and from the business point of view it would be far better to give them complete economic and political recognition before we provide them with money in this form. No one denies that they are in need of money to build up their industries, but instead of supplying it to this or that firm or bank . . . it would be far better to supply this credit as a Government loan or a currency loan to the Government of the country.

All these new governments which are struggling for existence and are tottering on the brink of the abyss of economic dissolution are anxiously in need of Government loans, and it would be far better, after we had stabilised them completely, to supply this money through the medium of the Government.

The plain English of this speech seems to be, firstly, that it is advisable to ensure the existence of the States bordering on Russia, and that there is no political objection to trading with them and assisting them since they have not established Soviets.

To make a sound business investment of the transaction, and to guard against any risk of British money being lost, it is necessary to bolster them up in such a way that they shall remain as they are, and neither join Soviet Russia nor their non-Soviet neighbours. In short, the policy which this speech appears to set forth is thoroughly reactionary. Is this what Colonel Malone actually meant to say, and if not, what did he mean? Does this speech represent his real views or is he labouring under the delusion that it is wise to express in the House of Commons views that are quite opposite to those one actually holds?

If this speech represents Colonel Malone's actual convictions, it certainly seems to us that he is wasting his energy in working to stop the military and naval attack on Soviet Russia. It is certain that Russia cannot for ever remain the one Communist nation. In the long run either the other nations must become Communist, or Communism will disappear from Russia.

We would urge upon Colonel Malone the view that there can be no compromise between Communism and Capitalism; that the Russian Intervention itself and all the other acts of the Government that he feels it his duty to oppose, are the inevitable outcome of the circumstance that it is a Capitalist Government, serving aggressive Capitalist interests, and endeavouring to preserve Capitalism in this time of vast changes, when the shock of the World-War has cracked the walls of the Capitalist citadel.

We say to Colonel Malone and the other visitors to Russia who take the stand that he does: You chose the side of Communism in Russia; why do you not openly choose the same here at home?

E. Sylvia Pankhurst.

COMMUNIST SUCCESSES in Jugo-Slavia.

By our Correspondent in Agram.

The first elections of any sort held in the new state of Jugo-Slavia—namely the municipal elections in Croatia, which were completed last Sunday—show the following results:—

Elections Results.

Zagreb (Agram).—Municipal Councillors, Communists, 20; Croatian autonomists, 15; Democrats, 5; Frank Party (pro-Austrian), 3; Clericals and Zionists each, 2; Peasants' Party, non-partisan and Social-Democrats each, 1. Out of about 17,000 votes cast, the Communists obtained about 7,000 and the Social-Democrats (patriots), 284. The Communists, not having an absolute majority, refused to take over the city government.

Osijek (Esseg).—Communists, 20; Croatian autonomists, 7; Democrats, 5; Radicals, 4; Clericals, 3; non-partisan, 1.

Karlavach (Karlstadt).—Communists, 11; Clericals, 8; non-partisans, 7; Democrats, 4.

Semlin.—Communists, 11; Radicals, 8; Frank Party, 6; Democrats, 3; non-partisan, 2.

Virovich.—Communists, 13; Radicals, 5; others, 6.

Pozega.—Communists, 8; Democrat-Socialist block, 8; others, 8.

Sisak.—Social-Democrats, 7; Democrats, 7; Croatian autonomists, 7; Communists, 2.

Nasiche.—More than 90 per cent. Communists.

Dugoreza.—16 out of 24 Communists.

Viravitza, Selze, Podvinje, Varosh, Sibinji and other towns.—Communists either strongest party or equal in strength to the strongest.

Only in Petrinji, of all the towns of which reports have come to hand, did the Communists fail to elect one or more representatives.

This first electoral test of party strength in Jugo-Slavia, shows the Communists to be the strongest of all the parties in the towns and cities; the Social-Democrats (Social-patriots allied with the Second International), almost extinct; and the bourgeois parties split into half a dozen special and local factions, uncertain, quarrelsome, and disorganised. The three Social-Democratic leaders who were members of the recent "Democratic" government in Belgrade, and who supported that government's monarchistic, imperialist and military programme, are leaders without followers.

In the municipal elections, needless to say, the peasant strength is not shown. The peasants are not at present Communist in feeling. Being 80 per cent. or 90 per cent. illiterate, they are politically backward, the Roman Catholics taking their political opinions from their priests and others from the smoothest local demagogue. Thus far, the Communist Party has occupied all its energy in defending itself against the attacks of the government. Now, however, having successfully established itself, it is commencing an active propaganda among the peasantry, with every hope of success.

Feudal Conditions

The conditions are on the whole favourable for them. In Bosnia-Herzegovina, the agrarian conditions are literally feudal. The greater part of the peasantry is either actually attached to the soil or obliged to pay to the landlord a specified part of the produce, usually a third, in return for some mythical "protection." This latter system sprang up during the Turkish occupation. Here the process of feudalisation, which took place in France in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, repeated itself in the fifteenth and sixteenth. The free proprietors were obliged, in the state of anarchy following the Turkish invasion, to group themselves about some local Mohammedan lord, paying him tribute, in return for safety.

Bourgeoisie Forced to Promise Land.

This youngest and purest of all the feudalisms that remain in the twentieth century, offers a distressing problem to the bourgeois parties of Jugo-Slavia. Ever since the armistice they have promised liberty and division of land to the peasants. But they cannot make up their minds to do it, and if they could, they would have difficulty in agreeing how it should be done. The reactionary parties are opposed to any agrarian law. The liberals are nervous over making any attack on private property. In the meantime the peasants are discontented and will probably grasp the Communist doctrine eagerly. In Croatia and Slavonia, although there is no feudalism and comparatively little illiteracy, there are many large estates and consequent land-hunger. In Dalmatia, the Communist organisation has already made headway among the small land-holding and day-labouring peasantry. Unless the Belgrade government speedily divides the large estates, Communism will make rapid strides among the peasantry of Jugo-Slavia.

Communists Demand the "Costituent."

The division and disorganisation of the bourgeois parties has been one of the chief assets of the Jugo-Slav Communists. These parties are still quarreling over the issues which excited them before the war. Few of them retain their influence over the people. The present parliament (which was never elected, but patched up among the appointed members of the various parties) is incapable of doing anything. But it is equally incapable of dissolving itself. The conservative parties, which block all proposals of the liberals, also block all efforts toward a new election, knowing that they would lose ground in the present state of things, and hoping for a more favourable time. Each party, too, is at a loss for a programme which can hope to satisfy the voters. In this political anarchy, the Communists, who form the only thoroughly organised and compact party, are daily winning new converts. They are much in the position of the Russian Bolsheviks in the middle of the Kerensky *régime*. They are demanding, as the Bolsheviks did, the convocation of the Constituent Assembly, and the bourgeois parties, refusing the demand, daily lose more influence among the people. At the same time, and again like the Bolsheviks, the Communists are organising a complete Soviet system to take the power from any future Constituent.

In economic matters the bourgeois governments of Jugo-Slavia are completely impotent. The railway system is wretched. The public services are demoralised. And although Croatia and Bosnia are among the richest food-producing lands in Europe, there is actually a food crisis in Jugo-Slavia. The value of the crown and dinar is sinking continually. Prices are rising terribly. It is no longer possible for a workman to support his family on even a high daily wage. Because of the Fiume quarrel, the army is still practically at war strength. The workers know that this unnatural crisis is due solely to bourgeois incompetance, and to the inability of a nationalist government to make economic peace with the rival nations—Roumania, Greece, Bulgaria and Italy. They are demanding a communism among nations that will enable economic life to become normal again.

Industrial Unions with Communists.

The economic hardships, which have continued steadily since the armistice, have favoured the universal organisation of the workmen in industry and in the public services. Industrial union organisation, it is stated, is now practically complete throughout all Jugo-Slavia. And these organisations are solidly allied with the Communist Party. "White" and "Yellow" unions practically do not exist. The workers in the public services are Communist to a man. In Bosnia we have the anomaly, that although every workman is organised, labour unions are still technically illegal.

In spite of this remarkable development in the towns and cities, it must be remembered that Jugo-Slavia is 85 per cent. agricultural. Some growth of Communism among the peasants is therefore absolutely necessary before a revolution can be attempted.

Second International Party Dying.

The old Social-Democratic Party, which still remains in the Second International, along with the Scheidemann party of Germany and the Henderson party of England, has practically ceased to exist. In Croatia, the municipal elections recently killed it, it had been relatively stronger than anywhere else in Jugo-Slavia. It now consists of a few leaders and a few newspapers only. In Zagreb, the Social-Democratic daily paper recently became a semi-weekly, and the Communist semi-weekly is about to become a daily. In Sarajevo, the splendid building which used to be the home of the Social-Democratic party organisation, is now being let for private dwellings. Even the Mohammedans of Bosnia are turning to Communism: the party has recently opened a branch meeting hall and reading room in the Moslem quarter of Sarajevo.

In policy, the Communist party, which is a member of the Moscow International, is much like the Socialist Party of Italy. It is not abstentionist, but it professes to place no faith in the parliament for which it asks its members to vote. Its platform calls for a soviet republic based on the dictatorship of the proletariat. Divisions of opinion within the party have hitherto weakened its action. These differences will be thrashed out in the national congress to be held May 23rd to the 27th. The extreme left, which believes it has the support of the masses, is very hopeful of winning.

ORIGINAL DEFECTIVE.

SOUTH WALES NOTES. By R. P.

The main topic of discussion in South Wales during the last weeks has been the ballot for or against a strike.

Those comrades who thought a ballot would give a national two-thirds majority are, to-day, sadder and wiser men. As usual, the widely read "gutter press" of South Wales has used every possible weapon to sway the miners to vote in favour of the Government terms. Quite apart from this, however, I am convinced that the demands were not large enough. The Welsh people are a highly emotional and imaginative people, and had comrades insisted on the ballot being on the original £2 demand, there is no doubt that the imagination of the miners would have been so fired as to secure a far more convincing majority in favour of a strike. With the acceptance of the Government terms by the M.F.G.B., South Wales miners will again have to decide what course of action they will adopt to win a living wage. Although the circumstances may not be so favourable as previously, delegates to the conference that will surely be called should see to it that the rank and file demand for £2 a week is kept to the forefront during the discussions.

The Nine Mile Point Strike.

The voting at the Special Conference, held on the 10th instant, to consider what action should be taken to support the Nine Mile Point men does not reflect very creditably upon the delegates. In spite of the fact that the Nine Mile Point men have been on strike for a vital principle, for three weeks, Conference decided to give fourteen days notice, and not to put notices in until the 19th. This means that the Nine Point Mile men will have been on strike for six weeks before the South Wales coalfield is brought to a standstill. This deplorable decision was only arrived at by a small majority, and cannot truly represent the intentions of the rank and file. This seems to be shown by the large majority of delegates who had been instructed to support the principle of a strike. When giving their mandates in future, lodges should distinctly specify "immediate down tools policy," and so avoid being faced with such a sorry situation.

Rhymney Valley's Mistake.

A very officious attitude has been adopted by the Rhymney Valley miners at their last monthly meeting. It was resolved "that deputations from other districts asking for support, by a sympathetic strike, should not be granted facilities to hold meetings by the lodge officials. Deputations should be referred to the District officials, who should convene a Special District meeting." Thus, in the event of a strike taking place in any locality, and the officials of the District where the strike was on not being consulted, before the rank and file in another District could be appealed to, the officials of that District would have to be approached. Naturally, upon learning that the workmen had ignored their prototype, these officials would refuse permission to approach the men. A general adoption of this policy would be equivalent to forming a Federation Officials' Union. This, however, is not likely to occur, but rather the necessity of the future will enforce a breaking of the ridiculous resolution by the Rhymney men.

Solidarity at Park and Dare Pits.

On Friday, the 9th instant, the management at the Park Pit, Rhondda, refused to pay a collier the minimum wage. At a general meeting of the workmen of the Park and Dare Pits, held that night, it was decided to send a deputation to the manager and inform him that unless he agreed to pay the man, a "down tools" policy would be adopted on the following Monday. Further, it was decided to call a mass meeting on Sunday afternoon to receive a report from the deputation. No settlement having been reached by the deputation, the mass meeting confirmed the resolution of the previous meeting, and sent the deputation to inform the management of their decision. Seeing the determined attitude of the men, the management took into consideration certain conditions that the careful investigation they made into the man's work should have revealed before, and agreed to pay the amount due to him. An unusual feature of this case was that the lodge committee invited its District agent to attend the meeting on Sunday afternoon. He declined to attend and the business was transacted without him. This proves that with determination and unity, the rank and file can become entire masters of their own destiny.

Anti-Nationalisation or Beer?

On Easter Tuesday, a huge demonstration against nationalisation was to have been held at Mountain Ash. Couriers travelled around every Conservative club in South Wales. Fares of members were to be paid to Mountain Ash, and the public were gleefully informed that 70,000 miners were sure to attend the demonstration to express their hostility to nationalisation. Not only did the 70,000 prove to be barely 10,000, but the principal speakers also failed to arrive. To complete a sorry tale: the demonstration against nationalisation passed unanimously a resolution protesting against the prohibition of beer. *Is this what is known as politics?*

In the House of Commons afterwards, Sir J. D. Rees (C.U.) advertised this demonstration as though it were highly important.

During the last week the Cardiff tramwaymen have undergone the educational benefits of a strike. Good fighting spirit was shown by the men, and one cannot help wishing that the nett gain by the men at the time they returned to work was greater.

May Day will see the birth of a monthly Labour paper in the Rhondda. If comrades will give the project the support it merits, it should have a long and useful life.

Mr. J. C. Gould, M.P. for a division of Cardiff, has made the alarming discovery that throughout South Wales a Soviet system has been set up and is ready to act at any moment. In this statement our friend is probably correct, but, when in a later interview he stated that certain extremists, chiefly members of the I.L.P., had banded together and formed committees called Soviets, he displayed an amazing ignorance of the situation. The Soviets of South Wales are the committees of the lodges of the South Wales Miners' Federation, representing, as they do in the majority of cases, every grade and district in the particular pit from which they have been selected. True, it does not function as a Soviet to-day, but once the revolution has been accomplished, the S.W.M.F. is so constructed as an organisation that, with little or no difficulty, it can take over and control in a most efficient manner the mining industry of South Wales. No Mr. Gould, the formation of the Soviets of South Wales has not been the work of a few extremists, but rather the concerted action of thousands of men determined so to change conditions that both they and their children shall be ensured a higher and nobler state of existence.

Yielding to the pressure of the rank and file, the Executive of the S.W.M.F. has decided to fix a date for the calling of a Special Conference to consider amendments to rules. Lodges will shortly be invited to send in amendments, these amendments having to be printed and distributed to every lodge for its consideration three months prior to the meeting of the Special Conference.

THE BUDGET.

The *Herald* calls it courageous, saying that Austin Chamberlain "has confounded the prophets and alarmed the Coalition." The repeal of the land duties and the refund of past sums collected in respect of them; the excess profits tax at 60 per cent. that was 80 per cent. in 1917 and 1918; the maintaining of the income tax at its present level, with an increase of only 6d. on incomes over £30,000 a year; the 1/- in the £ tax on limited liability profits, do not seem to us very drastic measures. But even if they were, the Capitalists know very well how to pass them on to those who are poorer than themselves in some shape or other.

The increased postal charges will handicap propaganda.

Under Capitalism no budget will ever be satisfactory.

RENTS TO BE RAISED.

The Committee sitting to consider how to relieve the landlords from the restraints of the Rent Restrictions Act has recommended an immediate increase of 30 per cent. in rent, and a further 10 per cent. increase in 12 months time.

This is a far bigger tax on the working-class mothers than anything imposed on the rich by the budget.

It is recommended that special provision should be made in the case of tenants whose income has not increased since 1914, but that is a pious wish not likely to materialise, unless by a grant under the Poor Law. Moreover, there are millions of workers whose incomes have increased since 1914 who cannot afford to pay more rent.

The Labour representative on the Committee has signed the Report, so that no strenuous opposition can be looked for in that quarter. Tenants who do not wish to pay increased rent must therefore depend on their own efforts.

Under Communism we should have no more of such difficulties.

In the meantime we now expect to see the rise of the Soviets of the streets and a rent strike.

UNDER THE HARROW.

At a Shoreditch inquest it was revealed that a father and two daughters, one of them 19 years of age, were obliged to sleep in one bed. The family of seven lived in two rooms, and owing to some being seriously ill, sleeping arrangements had grown difficult.

An inquest at Cheshunt brought to light the case of a soldier, seven times wounded, and living with his wife and child on 16/- a week, which was to be reduced at the end of the month to 12/-.

RUSSIAN CO-OPERATIVES.

A wireless press telegram reported that the *Ninth* Communist Party Congress resolved that

"With a view to preventing overlapping work of the co-operatives with the Soviet organs the local co-operative societies shall be gradually abolished and their functions transferred to the corresponding central and local Soviet organs, the Commissariats of Food, Agriculture, Education, which are parallel and competing bodies."

This is precisely what we should anticipate. As we pointed out in a recent article, the co-operatives are organisations built up by the workers under Capitalism in order that they may escape as far as they can from the burden of Capitalist exploitation by entering the field of Capitalist trading on their own account. Under Communism the co-operatives must inevitably disappear.

PRESENT POSITION IN GERMANY.

By an Eye-Witness.

The position here is as follows: The Trade Union Executive, together with the unions of the lower grade of the beureaucracy and the "Angestellten" (brain-workers, technicians, etc.), have formed a block with the Majority Socialists and the official Independents, that is the Kautsky-Hilferding-Crispien group within the party, who have chief influence on the Central Committee. The block has put forward the famous nine points, which the Government accepted, when it was in danger, but on which it is now, of course, going back. The block continues to "negotiate" with the Government, but nothing comes of it. It is the usual story. The present coalition government is of just the same type as the old, and real power remains as before with the generals at the Staff, and with those people who made the *coup d'etat*. The fact is the military dictatorship of the propertied classes goes on under high sounding democratic names.

The only real result so far of last month's crisis is to show that this dictatorship cannot be exercised openly, but must have a cover to hide up what is actually going on.

The fact remains that this middle block has sufficient support among opportunist elements, among trade unionists and among the whole of the lower grade of officials to prevent the parties of the left from carrying out a successful general strike. The rank and file of the Independents of Berlin, Middle Germany and the Ruhr, who follow Daeumig and Kurt Geyer, and are Communists in all but name, cannot bring off a general strike now. All they can do is to call out the metal workers in most centres, the engineers, electricians, water, gas workers, and perhaps tramways, but I do not think they could influence the railwaymen or any of the technical staffs, who mostly follow the trade union officials.

The old Communist Party, under Levi, Piek, Eberlein, are working closely with the Daeumig Independants. They criticise the latter, but only so far as to induce them, by their criticism, to break with the Kautsky-Hilferding Independants. A new Communist party has been founded, called the "Kommunistische Arbeiter Partei" (The Communist Workers' Party) which contains a large number of intellectuals. It stands on much the same ground as the Socialist Labour Party, the South Wales miners' group, and the W.S.F.

In general it may be said that the revolutionary movement here is momentarily on the ebb owing to the fact that the opportunist middle block behind the trade union officials has got a certain support among the less class-conscious rank and file. It will require a little time before this rank and file becomes disillusioned and before it realises that the power in the country is with the military reaction and that the nine points, which sound so nice, cannot possibly be carried out by the people who nominally have power. It is concievable that some of the revolutionary oases, which have been formed in the last month, consisting of Independants' and Communists' Workmens' Councils, mostly in middle Germany and Saxony, will continue their existence, because the military counter-revolution has to concentrate such forces round Berlin and in the Ruhr that it cannot deal with these isolated places.

PARLIAMENT AS WE SEE IT.

Russia.

Sir W. Davison (C.U.) asked whether the Government had received an urgent appeal from Count Bobrinski on behalf of "the last survivors of the middle-class civilisation in Russia, who have been brought to bay in the Crimea and the Kuban," and what steps has the Government taken by ships or otherwise to rescue them. Bonar Law replied: "Steps are being taken to afford assistance," but "I am not in a position to give any particulars."

Mr. and Mrs. Workman have to pay for the help the Government gives its Capitalist friends; it is wiser not to say just yet how much the bill will come to.

Vladivostok.

April 13th. Mr. Kellaway, for the Foreign Office, could make no statement as to whether the Japanese had captured Vladivostok; he said that all Siberia, except Vladivostok, Chita, and a few other ports on the Siberian Railway are controlled by the Soviets. The British Consul-General at Vladivostok is still at his post, but his relations with the local authorities are unofficial.

French Occupation of Germany.

April 12th. Some Liberal and Tory Members asked about the French occupation of German towns, but Bonar Law answered: It would be "very undesirable to have any discussion of the subject." He declared there had been no difference of opinion regarding this in the British Cabinet. Members asked why, since Parliament was not allowed to discuss the question and the Government refused Members all information, the Press had been specially invited to a meeting to hear the views of the Government. Law said the meeting was only to explain the action of the British Government in appearing to criticise the French, and that "no steps were taken to give any information to the Press until the Press had published abundant information on the other side."

Where does the Press get information about the doings of the Government, when the Government insists that it has told the Press nothing? This is one of the ancient mysteries.

Commander Kenworthy (Lib.) asked whether the British Government was "taking any steps to insist on the German troops withdrawing from the neutral zone. But again Bonar Law refused to tell.

April 14th. Colonel Wedgwood asked the Government to tell the French that "we do not consider Senegalese troops proper to garrison German towns."

During the War Wedgwood was constantly urging the use of black troops against the Germans! Elected as a Coalition Liberal, he has changed his tune since he joined the Labour Party; but will the change last?

April 15th. Lord Derby is now attending the Council of Ambassadors, said Bonar Law. He refused the request of Ben Spoor (Lab.) for a day to discuss the use of coloured troops by the Allies to control the people of Germany.

Questioned regarding the disarming of Germany in conformity with the Treaty, Churchill said: "progress was quite good until the revolution occurred."

Asked by Colonel Malone whether Britain would bring pressure on Germany to stop the White Terror and massacre of workers. Law, of course, replied in the negative.

Victimisation.

April 12th. The Home Secretary admitted that a cab driver had been refused a renewal of his licence because he had evaded military service. He also admitted that ex-constable Alsworth, after 17 years' service, had been evicted on dismissal for coming out on strike, and that he was ordered to pay £15 19s., the cost of evicting him.

To Increase Tramway Fares.

The Ministry of Transport put forward a Bill to bring about the raising of fares on the trams. Municipalities are not to be allowed to raise the fares enough to raise a profit to relieve rates; private companies are to be allowed to raise fares enough for them "to pay a reasonable return on their Capital" and to undertake prospective developments. The Municipalities are not to be helped to develop, thus Colonel Wedgwood moved to defer the question for three months—that was intended to kill the Bill. He argued that the Municipal tramway fares should be decided by the locality, and that the private companies should be allowed to go to ruin, in order that the Municipalities might acquire them. Two other Labour Members, Griffiths and Graham, dissociated themselves from Wedgwood's view. Griffiths said he would only oppose the Bill if it would give increased profits to the private shareholders.

These two men did not object to keep the companies going on the old proportion of profit. There is not an atom, even of mild, Municipal, Socialistic reformism about their political views. Wedgwood's amendment was negatived without a division.

W. Graham supports the Property Owners.

The Secretary for Scotland introduced a Bill (1) to enable owners of Scotch house property to recover from their tenants the local rates retrospectively; (2) to make landlords declare the amount at which the house is assessed for rating purposes; and to punish those who obtain increased rents on false pretences.

W. Graham (Lab.) came out as the landlords' champion. He offered thanks that the Bill would remove an injustice to owners of house property, but hoped the recovery by the landlord of Education and Poor rates would be more carefully safeguarded in Committee: unless this were done he feared that the landlord, and not the tenant, might be obliged to pay these rates. He also urged that it was inconvenient for landlords to declare the rate of assessment if the tenancy were to be a short one. Graham is evidently being told by the property owners that the only way to safeguard his seat is to safeguard them!

More and more the Labour Party is acting, not as a Party of the masses, but of the lower middle-class.

Non-Economic Rents.

April 14th. Thirty local authorities have erected houses, but in no case does the rent obtained, which varies from 7/- in the country to 17/6 in large towns, represent an economic return on the Capitalist cost, said Dr. Addison. The rates and taxes supply the deficiency. Thus landowners, building contractors, money lenders and others are subsidised out of the National Exchequer, towards which we are all forced to contribute.

Until Communism replaces the Capitalist system, this sort of thing will continue. In Communist Russia rents and landlords are both abolished.

Army and Air Forces Bill.

April 12th. Commander Kenworthy (Lib.) said that because this Bill was regarded as a matter of form because civilian control over the Army had been weakened and the Army had become a vested interest, he objected to having a standing Army at all. In Germany the standing Army was completely out of hand and dominating the Government.

New Offences.

April 13th. Clause 23 of the Army and Air Force Bill was agreed to without a division. It makes liable to six months' imprisonment anyone who wilfully impedes, obstructs, or otherwise interferes with a soldier in the exercise of his duties.

Evidently this is aimed at such things as "don't shoot" propaganda in this country and in Ireland. The Clause also provides the same punishment for anyone who wilfully causes any infirmity or injury to a soldier, or helps the soldier to injure himself, in order to evade military service.

That seems to indicate that we have not by any means seen the last of conscription.

THE DEATH SENTENCE IN THE ARMY.

John Ward 'pposes Soldier's Right to Appeal

Major Lowther (C.U.) moved that soldiers under sentence of death should be given the right to appeal to the Court of Criminal Appeal. John Ward (C.L.), the reactionary navvies' representative, opposed the suggestion, saying that the Commander-in-Chief lets off nearly 90 per cent. of the men. When Ward was 5,000 miles from Vladivostok, it would have been absurd, he said, to allow the men to appeal to a Court in Britain. "If you want to make it a real camaradarie affair," he added, "keep it as it is." It was pointed out that the proposal was to give the soldier the right of appeal if the Commander-in-Chief had failed to let him off or to commute the sentence, but that did not influence John Ward.

We should like to know what the private soldiers think of Ward's camaraderie! The motion was defeated by 124 votes to 42.

"Crucifixion" upheld.

Major Hayward (C.L.) moved to abolish field punishment No. 1, which is known as "crucifixion," by which men are tied up to guns or posts in face of the enemy. Hayward pointed out that in April, 1919, the Government promised to look into the matter, but Sir A. Williamson replied that the Government decided this degrading torture could not be dispensed with. The motion to abolish it was lost by 105 votes to 45. That renegade Bradford I.L.P.er, James Parker, voted against the motion; whilst John Ward did not vote at all.

Unemployed Ex-Service Men.

April 14th. There are 25,700 Ex-Service men at present on the Labour Exchange registers.

Snowden Congratulated.

April 13th. The debate on the foreign exchanges merely turned on the fact that the American exchange is against Britain. Mr. Baldwin, (C.U.) and Under Secretary to the Treasurer, declared that the one remedy is increased production. He referred appreciatively to Philip Snowden as a "late distinguished Member" and to the fact that Snowden has been advocating increased production to save Central Europe. although it will benefit the Capitalists.

Sir Fredierick Banbury, well known as a crusted Tory and bankers' representative, was also pleased with Snowden's writings on this point, and said that the Government, instead of contemplating reducing the hours of Labour to 48 per week, should raise them to 60. Snowden is finding himself in strange company nowadays!

War Service Stunts Vanishing.

April 14th. To popularise the War and draw in the Social Reformers, all sorts of Social Welfare stunts were boomed. The National Kitchens, now to be closed although they are actually run at a profit, and the local Food Control Committees were amongst the most popular stunts. The Food Control Committees are to be dissolved on June 30th.

Lady Astor Opposes Easier Divorce.

A resolution based on the report of the Report of the Royal Commission, was moved to grant divorce for desertion, cruelty, incurable insanity, habitual drunkenness, or commuted sentence of death; three years' desertion to qualify for divorce.

Viscountess Astor, in a most cowardly and hypocritical speech, opposed the resolution. She said: "I want, in making up my mind about some of the proposals of the Commission, to see during the next five or ten years how far some of them should be adopted and modified, without lowering the dignity of marriage. . . . Shall we help women and children and men by making divorce easier? I think the world is too loose altogether. What we want is tightening up."

The speech was evidently dictated by the fear of losing votes.

Austrian and Bulgarian Treatie's Bill.

April 14th. Cecil Harmsworth (C.L.) Foreign Office, said that the Austrian Treaty was "in some respects an indulgent, even a lenient Treaty" The criticisms of the Treaty were mostly on minor and pettifogging points. Colonel Wedgwood (Lab.) urged that the administration of the Treaties should be handed over to the League of Nations, an institution in which he still apparently believes.

Starving Education.

It was pointed out that the Tottenham education rate is being raised to 6/6 in the £ as the salaries of teachers have been increased and other improvements are being made. An appeal for an increased Government grant was made, but the Minister of Education refused it. Why? Because it is only the children of Mr. and Mrs. Workman who attend the elementary schools.

Stanton Asks for More.

Stanton, the Merthyr jingo, demanded higher wages for Members of Parliament. His constituents do not get an average wage of £8 a week paid whether they work or not!

High Finance.

WILL BRITAIN BE RUINED?

Extract from a letter from a Communist comrade abroad on the British situation:—

"Dear Comrade: . . . I do not know exactly how you yourself conceive the present situation in England. From looking at it here, it seems to me as if there is coming a time which will be an acid test for the leading circles, and even the working-masses themselves, in the big Capitalist countries. Until now, even certain bourgeois liberals have found it advantageous, for purposes of opposition, to set up as a kind of "pro-Bolsheviks." But now that the Soviet power is beginning to be firmly established in its own country, and when the revolutionary wave may, perhaps very soon, roll further into both Asia and Europe, signs of revolutionary movement will necessarily appear in the big Capitalist countries themselves. Then everybody will have to determine his attitude towards the question as an immediate problem. And this will be a hard bit to chew for a certain section of English Labour whose attitude towards the movement is similar to the position of the parvenue-boss or skilled craft-worker towards the mass of general, unskilled workers. Because of this, a difficult and dangerous situation may arise.

"We think it very important for the working-class of England to choose the right attitude to the revolution everywhere. England—as the centre of Capitalism—absorbs surplus values from all the world, and consequently lives partly the life of a parasite. If developments should reach a critical point, and if the working-class does not organically understand how to adapt itself to the revolutionary process but simply sits on the fence, whilst all the countries exploited by England at last, through the revolution, liberate themselves from subjection, then there will occur in England an economic breakdown, the like of which history has never known. Perchance half, or more than half, the population will be helplessly left to starve. On a lesser scale, Vienna is an example, and perhaps, partly, too, Germany, if she does not manage in time to open up relations with Russia.

"This is a terrible prospect, but we here are not quite sure that all comrades in England are aware of it. . . ."

BETWEEN OURSELVES. By L. A. MOTLER.

You will have heard, Henry, a great deal about what is called solidarity. Hyde Park and other orators have often told you what a great thing it would be if the workers learnt solidarity. If only the workers were as one man wielding a very hefty axe!

And in connection with solidarity, there goes also class consciousness. My Uncle Fitzarthur, for instance, is class conscious. Whenever the workers go on strike for more pay, they are being selfish and making the Empire plunge headlong into the nearest canal. But when a profiteer makes a few extra thousand it is "a good stroke of business."

It is true that the workers are not class conscious, not even good trade unionists are. You will find the trade unionist 'bus conductor demanding your excess fare with as much ferocity as if he were a director of the 'bus company. You will find the trade unionist ticket collector doing much the same thing. You will find the trade unionist clerk writing out offensive letters at the bidding of his employer. You will find the trade unionist "comp" setting up garbled "news" of a strike and the trade unionist machineman printing it.

From which you will gather that it is not necessary to be a trade unionist in order to be class conscious. It will be said, however, that this arises out of craft unionism; the old unions are played out and we are on the way to One Big Union. As soon as the workers, it is said, organise on industrial lines, all will be well. For instance, instead of the carpenters in the building industry belonging to one union, the bricklayers to another, and the labourers to a third, they would all belong to one big building union.

True, but it has as much sense as all the burglars, all the pickpockets, and all the policemen of sorts belonging to one industry. What does it prove, except that you have all the people in one industry banded together in order to improve their position. It does not get us any nearer the revolution.

But, it will be urged, unity is strength, and think of all the things such solidarity can do. They can go on strike and enforce anything on their own terms. I suggest, however, that as you cannot bring in the revolution by Act of Parliament, neither can you usher it in by a big strike. Not, at least by the usual kind of strike we hear so much about.

Let us take Ireland. Recently the whole country, for all practica purposes, was on strike; there was unanimous solidarity against the British Government in its treatment of political prisoners in Mountjoy. This solidarity won, a fact of which every rebel will be proud. But the day after, things went on much as usual.

"Go back to work now," the leaders said, "you have won!" Back, they seemed to say, like good little boys, now you have shown us what you can be got to do under our brilliant leadership. And the benches were again busy, the trams and trains ran again, and the Stock Exchange went on gambling with the people's food and necessaries.

Before the war our leaders had a very similar idea. Their dream was an army of class conscious solidarity, which would down tools as soon as war approached; and when it was called off, would sweep magnificently back to work. The trade union and party leaders have only two battle calls —"Come out!" and "Go back!" They believe in discipline, loyalty and unquestioning obedience.

I submit, Henry, that we don't want what I may call a Prussianisation of the working class; no matter under what fine sounding word the stunt is worked, whether solidarity or class consciousness. It is all very well to imagine a massed army of the working class in One Big Union, ready to throw down the challenge to the boss class, and go back to work the next day. It is better to have a good drove of sheep.

The workers must organise. Perfectly! The workers must stick by each other and stand out against the boss every time. Yes. But in order to do so, they need not leave all the thinking to their leaders.

The only solidarity of those worth while is that of those who work—and think! It is better to have a Red Army than a very green one.

THE WORKERS' SOCIALIST FEDERATION

For Revolutionary International Socialism, the ending of Capitalism and Parliament, and the substitution of a Federation of Workers' Industrial Republics.

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Write to the SECRETARY, 400, Old Ford Road, London, E.3. Telephone: East 1787.

LONDON MEETINGS: OUTDOOR.

Friday, April 23rd, Manor Park Road, Harlsden, near Willesden Junction Station, 7.30 p.m. Henry Sara and others.

Saturday, April 24th, The Grove, Hammersmith, 3 p.m. Minnie Birch, Melvina Walker.
7 p.m. Miss Grove, P. A. Edmunds, Melvina Walker.

Sunday, April 25th, Osborn Street, Whitechapel, 11.45 a.m. Di Colonna, Melvina Walker.
Dock Gates, Poplar, 7.30 p.m. Harry Pollitt, Melvina, Walker.

Thursday, April 29th, Cobden Statue, 7.30 p.m. Henry Sara, Melvina Walker.

INDOOR.

Monday, April 26th, 8 p.m. Poplar W.S.F. Business Meeting.

Friday, April 23rd, 400, Old Ford Road, 7 to 10 p.m. Dancing.

OTHER ORGANISATIONS.

EAST LONDON WORKERS' COMMITTEE.

Sunday, April 25th, Victoria Park, 12 (noon). Walter Ponder and others.

Thursday, April 29th, International Socialist Club, 28, East Road, City Road, 7.30 p.m. Business Meeting.

WALTHAMSTOW LEAGUE OF RIGHTS.

Tuesday, April 27th, William Morris Hall, Somers Road, 3 p.m. Mrs. Simpson

THE

WORKERS' DREADNOUGHT

can be obtained from the following newsagents:—

Mr. PALMER, 130, Craven Park Rd., Harlesden, N.W.10.
Mr. A. MITCHELL, 64, Nicoll Road, Harlesden, N.W.10.
Mr. M. F. LORNTON, 125, High Street, Harlesden, N.W.10.

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A Branch of the W.S.F. has been formed at EXETER. The Secretary's name is A. Symes, 16 Hoopern Street, Exeter.

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By C. ZINOVIEV

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THE SOVIETS OF THE STREET.

By E. SYLVIA PANKHURST.

Communism and the Family, by Alexandra Kolontay Russian Soviet Commissary for Social Welfare.
Price FOURPENCE.

IMPORTANT.

The *Workers' Dreadnought* has now arranged for press telegrams from all countries. The telegraphic address is "WODREDNORT, BOWROM, LONDON."

THE B.S.P. CONFERENCE.

A Correction.

Comrade Inkpin, of the B.S.P., writes to correct some inaccuracies in our comments on the B.S.P. Conference. We greatly regret that these should have occurred and tender our apologies to the B.S.P. As a matter of fact, since the B.S.P. failed to send us a press notice of its conference, we were not represented there and took our reports from the *Daily Herald* and the Capitalist press.

The resolution regarding the Trade Unions joining their striking forces at one time, which Comrade Inkpin reports to have been carried, we thought had been lost. We were led astray by the following passages which appeared in the *Herald*, and thought that the words adopted were those in italics, which, in the *Herald*, apppeared in black type. We fully admit that this was due to rather hasty reading on our part. Comrade Inkpin will exonerate us from any desire to misrepresent the facts, since everyone knows that his vigilence would not allow any mistake we might make to go unchallenged.

"George Deer, of the Executive Committee, described the resolution as "Utopian," and talk of combined action by all Trade Unions as "moonshine" and sheer waste of time.

"*If they wanted a real industrial forward movement the Conference should send out a manifesto telling organised workers that if they wished to do anything for themselves they must reorganise themselves upon a class basis.*

"E. W. Cant (Scottish organiser) pointed out that different districts favoured different methods of obtaining their ends, and the British Socialist Party could not do better than foster every tendency in the movement that led towards revolution."

Comrade Inkpin's letter to us, which appeared in the *Call* last week, did not reach us until after last week's issue had gone to press. The letter sent to us is not quite the same as that which appears in the *Call*. Comrade Inkpin has inadvertently quoted in the letter which actually reached us a resolution which only refers to Parliamentary action incidentally, instead of the resolution on Parliamentary action in the letter appearing in the *Call* which is supposed to be a copy of that sent to us. We reproduce here the resolution we believe Comrade Inkpin *meant* to insert in his letter to us:—

"This Conference of the British Socialist Party, having in mind the recent electoral successes of Labour, warns the working-class that the mere increase in number of the Parliamentary group, or even the formation of a Labour Government will not advance the workers' cause unless the political action of Labour is consciously and deliberately revolutionary, that is, consciously and deliberately aims at overthrowing the Capitalist system. Already certain sections of the Capitalist class and their press organs, realising the possibility of Labour's triumph at the polls, are seeking to undermine and nullify its consequences by conceding "the capacity of Labour to govern," hoping thereby to cajole the workers into dissipating their strength in vain efforts to "govern" after the Capitalist model; and already certain Labour leaders, devoid of all revolutionary foresight, and regarding themselves as potential Cabinet ministers, seek to draw the workers along the disastrous path of compromise with Capitalism. This conference declares that all such attempts to blunt the revolutionary edge of political action must, if successful, inevitably lead to reaction; and urges the workers to support only candidates who pledge themselves to use the political weapon as a means of more vigorously waging the revolutionary class struggle and establishing the dictatorship of the workers, and untimately overthrowing the Capitalist system."

Comrade Inkpin adds:—

"You say, further: 'The W.S.F. has several times found its views to be in conflict with those of B.S.P. delegates in regard to the relationship of the Communist Party to the industrial organisations and to industrial mass action. We of the W.S.F. adopt the position laid down by Zinoviev in his *Communist Party and Industrial Unionism*. This is, that the Communist Party should define the tactics of the class struggle on the industrial as well as all fields of action.'

"Zinoviev's attitude, as outlined above, is all right, but where B.S.P. delegates have sometimes come into conflict with the W.S.F. has been on a different matter. To define tactics is one thing; to dictate action another, not because the latter policy is necessarily wrong, but because there is no power at the present time behind the dictation. It simply appears, therefore, to the organised workers as so much impertinence, and so far from increasing the influence of the Communists, actually lessens it"

We do not know what is Comrade Inkpin's definition of the difference between "defining the tactics of the class struggle" and "dictating action."

London, *April 17th.*

MAY DAY.

Comrades who are out for the ***Communist Revolution*** are asked to volunteer to sell on May Day, red flags, bearing the Soviet arms, programmes, portraits of Lenin, Luxemburg, Liebnecht and other communists, literature, "Dreadnoughts," etc.

Write to the Manager "Workers' Dreadnought," 152, Fleet Street, E.C.4.

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SUPPLEMENT TO THE **Workers' Dreadnought** Saturday, April 24th, 1920.

THE CLASS STRUGGLE IN BRITAIN.

A Record of the Past Six Years. By A. Fineberg.

Continued from last week's Supplement.

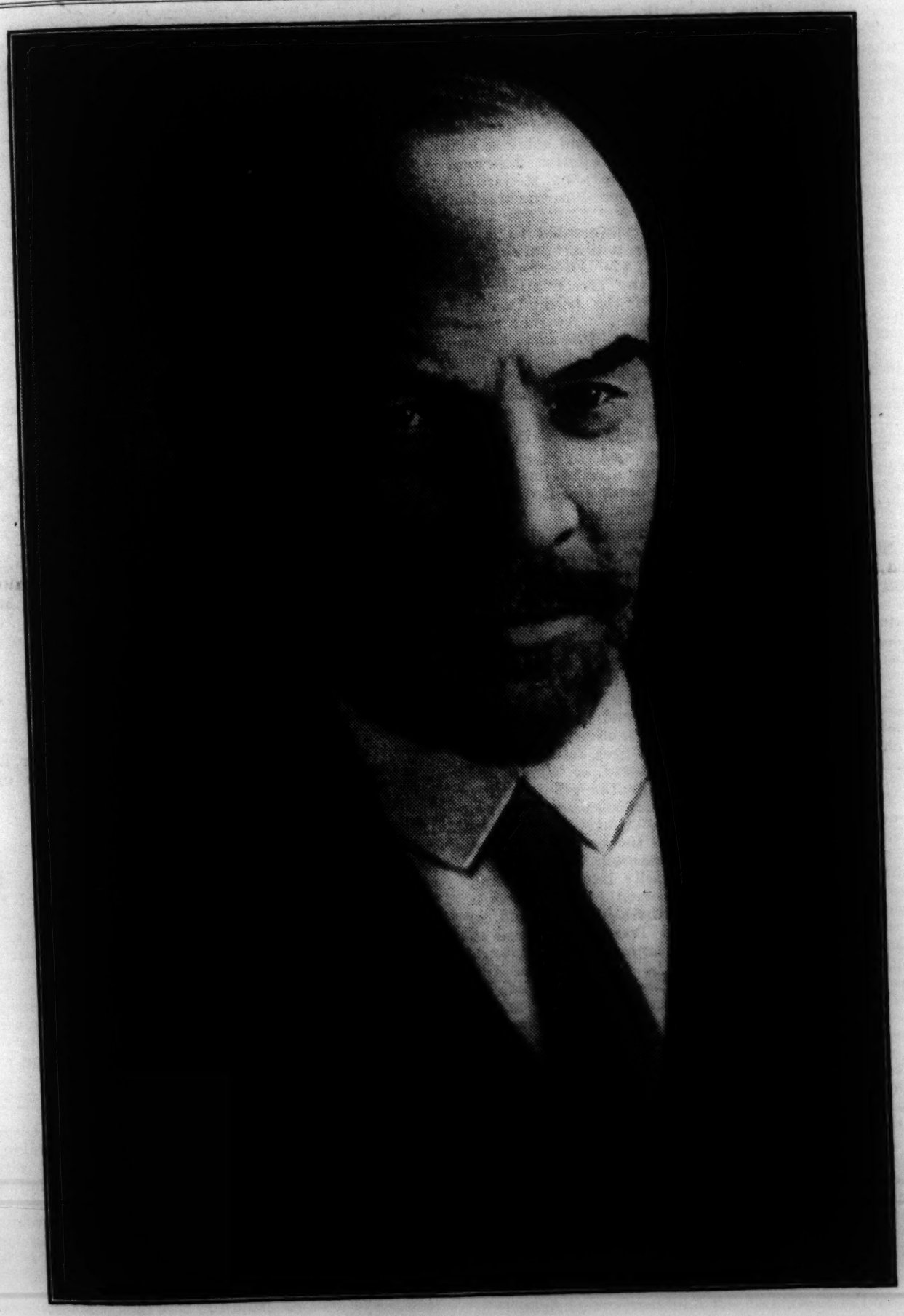
The National Register.

Immediately after the passage of the Munitions' Act, a further step towards military and industrial conscription was made in the form of the National Registration Act. The proper psychological atmosphere was also being prepared by the cry of restriction of output. The worker was coming to be considered no longer as a human being with rights and privileges, but as so much "man-power" necessary for filling the trenches and for providing munitions for the prosecution of the War. The National Register proposed to furnish the information necessary for estimating and controlling the man-power of the country.

Clause 4 set out questions to be answered by every male and female person in Great Britain between the ages of 15 and 65. The age, state, the nature of employment, and whether it was "serving war purposes," were to be given, and each person was to declare whether he or she was skilled in, and able and willing to perform any other form of work than he or she was engaged upon, and if so, which kind?

The information was to be collected and collated by local registration committees set up by the local authorities, controlled by a central registration committee in conjunction with the Board of Trade.

Ministerial assurances were given in the House of Commons and in public meetings that no compulsion of any kind was contemplated; nevertheless, in the Parliamentary debate, it was made clear that to many of its supporters the chief merit of the National Registration Act lay in the possibility of using it as an instrument of compulsion. Nevertheless, few people, even amongst Socialists, were willing to admit that the National Register was a definite and calculated step towards conscription, and few indeed were they who refused to register—about half-a-dozen people were fined or imprisoned for such refusal. Some who refused were allowed to go unpunished. The *Workers' Dreadnought*, as a matter of fact, was the only paper which issued a warning that this meant conscription.



NIKOLAI LENIN.

Conscription Campaign.

But no sooner was registration completed than a campaign in favour of conscription was launched, headed by the Northcliffe Press. The Cabinet appeared to be divided on the issue. An influential majority, including Mr. Asquith, Mr. Balfour and Lord Kitchener apparently still adhered to the voluntary system. But Mr. Lloyd George, supported by Lord Northcliffe, was conducting a conscriptionist intrigue, in which he was finally to triumph.

The question came before the Trade Union Congress held at Bristol in September, 1916, and a declaration against conscription was unanimously adopted. A week or two later a conference of the Labour leaders was addressed by Mr. Asquith and Lord Kitchener. At this meeting the Labour leaders were told frankly that unless a sufficient number of men were raised by voluntary means, compulsion would have to be resorted to. The leaders then undertook to conduct a recruiting campaign of their own. In this way they played into the hands of the conscriptionists, for they admitted that the failure of their campaign would justify the introduction of conscription.

The Derby Scheme.

On October 6th, 1915, Lord Derby was appointed Minister of Recruiting, and the next stage in the campaign was developed. The maxim adopted was: "Divide and conquer." The Derby Scheme of recruitment began and was to last ten weeks, during which period 35,000 recruits were to be raised. All men between the ages of 19 and 41 were divided into 46 age groups, single men comprising the first 23 groups, and married men the remainder. Men in these groups who had, hitherto resisted social and economic pressure to enlist were called upon to "attest" their willingness to serve if called upon. The attested men were to be left in their occupations until their own age group should be called up, as the need of further men for the Army should arise.

The First Tribunals.

Tribunals were set up to consider applications from attested men for exemption from service on the ground of business or domestic hardship, or on the grounds of being employed in munitions or other essentian work. An employer could appeal on behalf of an employee. These men were starred in the records and furnished with a badge. Men now found themselves faced with the choice either of attesting or being dismissed from their employment, and under this pressure and hoping that they would never be called on to serve, masses of men flocked to attest.

It was now plain that this was the last step towards military conscription. With practically the whole manhood of the country now liable to service, the resistance to compulsion would be small. During the progress of the scheme abundant hints were let fall by the Prime Minister and Lord Derby, that, if at the end of the period "a substantial number of young men" had failed to attest, compulsion would have to be resorted to. No definition was given of what would be considered "a substantial number."

First Military Service Act, 1916.

Meanwhile, the opposition to conscription was growing. The No-Conscription Fellowship was formed, and was organising energetically. Labour organisations all over the country were pledging themselves to resist the hateful thing.

At the beginning of the new year a Cabinet Committee, appointed to report on the success of the Derby Scheme, professed itself dissatified with the results, and on January 5th, 1916, the Military Service Bill was introduced.

An emergency joint Labour and Trade Union Conference was held on January 6th, which declared against conscription by an overwhelming majority, and advised the Labour Party to resist. But the impotence of Labour was once more demonstrated, for, in spite of its declared opposition, the Military Service Act was passed on January 27th, 1916. Under its provisions, all unattested single men within the Derby groups were "deemed to be enlisted." Exemptions, absolute, conditional and temporary were allowed, and an exemption clause for conscientious objectors was inserted.

Industrial Safeguards.

During the passage of the Bill various pledges, ostensibly safeguarding the workers against industrial conscription were given by members of the Government, and the following ostensible safeguards were introduced into the Bill itself:—

Clause 2 (3): "No certificate of exemption shall be conditional upon the person to whom it is granted continuing, or entering into employment under any specified employer, or in any specified place or establishment."

Clause 2 (4): "Where a conditional certificate is granted, the conditions upon which it is granted shall be stated on the certificate."

On the other hand, under Clause 3: "A certificate of exemption . . . in the case of an application on

conscientious grounds . . . may be conditional on the applicant being engaged in some work which, in the opinion of the Tribunal dealing with the case, is of national importance."

And Section 3 of Clause 3 provides: "If a man holding a certificate of exemption ceases to qualify for the certificate, he shall be liable, after the expiration of two months, to the operation of the Act, unless he, in the meantime, has obtained a renewal of the certificate."

Second Military Service Act, 1916.

This Act applied only to single men, but the fate of the married men was not long in being decided. On May 25th, 1916, the Military Service Act (No. 2) was passed, and under it all married men up to the age of 41 were also " deemed to have enlisted."

The safeguards in the first Act against industrial conscription were, in the second, dangerously tampered with.

Section 5: "The provision in sub-section (3) of section 2 of the principal Act, that no certificate of exemption shall be conditional upon a person to whom it is granted continuing, or entering into employment under any specified employer, or in any specified place or establishment, shall not apply to a certificate of exemption granted on the ground of conscientious objection."

Under the first Act, two months' grace, to obtain a renewal of his certificate, was allowed to a man who ceased to be employed on work of "national importance. Under the second Act this period was limited to two weeks; the words " unless in the meantime the man has made an application for the renewal of his certificate " were substituted for "unless in the meantime the man has obtained a renewal of his certificate."

The Act had not long been working before protests against it began to arise all over the country, and especially on the Clyde and the Tyne. The workers at once began to learn by vivid experience how infamous were its provisions; fines and imprisonments were imposed for trivial causes such as lateness at work. Workers, even young girls and lads were punished for leaving employment in poison-processes which were seriously undermining their health. From district after district many cases of grossly unjust decisions by the Munitions Tribunal were reported, and all sorts of trouble arose in regard to the wages of women and semi-skilled and unskilled men who had been newly brought into the industry and were put to do the work of skilled men at lower rates.

The compact which preceded the Act had been made between the Minister of Munitions and the Trade Union officials, and the rank and file now began to feel a bitter resentment at the way in which their officials had thus light-heartedly signed away the safeguards which the workers had built up for their protection after seventy years of struggle.

The employers made abundant use of the coercive powers of the Munitions' Act, which reduced the workers to indentured slavery, whilst the Government " control " over employers in " controlled " establishments was a mere matter of form without real existence.

A Commission of Inquiry was appointed to allay the rising discontent. This Commission admitted that the workers' complaints were fully born out, particularly in the matter of leaving certificates.

On November 30th, 1916, Lloyd George addressed a conference of representatives from 55 Unions connected with munition making. He promised to redress the grievances, but when the Bill that was to make good his promise came to be introduced it was found that it failed to correspond with his pledges.

After a further conference with the A.S.E., this Bill was amended, but even in its new form, it did not comply with the A.S.E. demands. However, it modified the leaving certificates, and compelled the employer to grant them immediately a man was suspended. A Munitions Appeal Tribunal was set up and powers were given to the Minister of Munitions to regulate the wages of women and of semi-skilled and unskilled men. Provisions were made for the avoidance of the delays in arbitration which had become a scandal, and imprisonment was abolished in default of paying the fines imposed on the workers for lateness, absence, and so on, by the Munitions' Tribunals. In principle, however, the amending Bill left matters where they were; the Act remained a "slavery Act," and even the power given to the Minister to regulate wages was found to have given the Ministry the opportunity to prevent, until it chose to permit them, increases of wages to all sections of workers in munition industries. The Ministry of Munitions proved, on many occasions, more difficult to deal with than the employers.

Lloyd George Visits the Clyde.
"Forward" Suppressed.

The amended Act was passed on January 27th, 1916, but, meanwhile, Mr. Lloyd George made a tour of the munition works of the Tyne and Clyde, with the purpose of popularising the dilution of labour scheme, to which the rank and file workers there were displaying great hostility and obstructing at every opportunity. At Glasgow, Lloyd George met with a very unfavourable reception, and he thought it necessary that the Government Press Bureau should issue to the press an official (and garbled) version of the meeting. The Glasgow *Forward* printed a true account of the affair, and, in consequence, was suppressed for four weeks.

Following on this visit three Commissioners for the Dilution of Munition Industries were appointed to draw up schemes of dilutions for separate areas and individual workshops. The Clyde Workers' Committee and the Shop Stewards demanded the right to be consulted in the formation of these schemes. The Clyde Workers' Committee was the direct descendant of the "Central Labour Withholding Committee," which conducted the strike of 1915, when the Trade Union officials had repudiated it. The Government Commissioners refused to negotiate with the Shop Stewards, although they were the real representatives of the men ,and not the official Trade Union officials, whom alone the Commissioners would recognise. Discontent grew when it became known that in certain shops the women introduced under the dilution scheme were being grossly underpaid, in some instances receiving wages as low as 12s. and 14s. per week.

On January 12th, 1916, the Clyde Engineers and Kindred Trades Joint Committee demanded 2d. an hour increase of wages to meet the rise in prices. The demand was a modest one, for in the period in which prices had risen by 48 per cent., wages had only been increased by 10 per cent. The claim was referred for arbitration to the Committee on Production, which, after long delay, finally refused the increase altogether for skilled men, but made small concessions to unskilled men.

How the Strike Began.

The unrest was brought to a head on March 17th, when the workers at Parkhead Forge, Glasgow, came out on strike. The strike was provoked by the arbitary act of the management in forbidding David Kirkwood, a shop steward, from visiting other departments in order to investigate the conditions and rates of the unskilled men, women and soldiers who had been introduced under the dilution schemes. Until that time the right of the shop steward to confer with the stewards of other departments had not been interfered with.

The Commission immediately attempted to intimidate the strikers by posting notices drawing attention to Regulation 42 of the Defence of the Realm Act, directed against any person attempting to " impede, delay, or restrict the production, repair, or transport of war material." Another poster guaranteed protection to all who immediately resumed work. The posters, however, failed to produce the effect intended, for the strike rapidly spread to other shops until about 1,500 to 2,000 men were involved.

A.S.E. Executive Repudiates the Strike.

The men were again abandoned by the official Trade Union leaders. The Executive of the A.S.E. called upon the men to resume work and forbade the payment of strike pay.

The Deportations.

Six days after the commencement of the strike the Government resorted to drastic and unprecedented measures. On the morning of March 24th it became known that six of the strike leaders had been kidnapped and deported out of the strike area. The deportees were Kirkwood, Messer, McManus, Shields, Haggarty and Wainwright. The deportations were carried out under the doubtful authority of Section 14 of D.O.R.A., which, when it was originally framed was supposed to apply to spies and enemy agents. The regulation gave the military authority power to prohibit residence in a forbidden area to any person " suspected of acting, or having acted, or being about to act in a manner prejudicial to the public safety or defence of the realm." The deportations occasioned some stir throughout the country. It was indicative of the extent to which the boasted liberties of the country had been tampered with, that a military authority could arbitrarily intervene in and break a strike, but so accustomed had the people become to such outrages on their liberties, and so securely were the Labour and Trade Union leaders bound to the policy of the Government, that nowhere outside the strike area was the seriousness of the measure appreciated. As a matter of fact, the official Trade Union leaders had no sympathy for the strike and were content to see it smashed by any means. The deportations were accompanied by the arrest of 30 other leaders.

The arrests and deportations continued. On March 30th, MacDougall and Maxton were arrested. By this time nine shop stewards had been deported and 60 had been arrested. The men held doggedly on for another week, insisting on the release of their leaders before resuming work. But the unexpected move on the part of the Government had demoralised them, and at length the strikers decided by ballot to resume work, and the Clyde Workers' Committee left the conduct of negotiations in the hands of the A.S.E. Executive.

The Substitution Scheme.

After the passage of the Military Service Acts, the situation resolved itself into a struggle between the War Office and the Ministry of Munitions for the dilution of man-power. The pledges given by Government representatives during the passage of the Act were conv niently forgotten, and industrial conscription (never so named, but under the guise of "combing out," "substitution," and "dilution") gradually became general.

The Man Power Board.

The Man-Power Board, set up in September, 1916, to adjust the claims of the War Office and the Munitions Department, issued its report recommending combing out and further dilution. But the most decided step towards industrial compulsion was the Substitution Scheme. Under this scheme, Local Substitution Committtees were set up. Their business was to facilitate the release of men physically fit for military service and to replace them by substitutes not of military age, or if of military age, not fit for general service. Men of a low physical category were not to be sent into the Army, and unfit men already in the Army were to be released. The position of such a man was as follows: A job as substitute would be found for him, and he would be offered the choice of accepting it or *being sent into the Army*. If he accepted he had to sign a form which bound him to undertake work for war purposes in the employment of *any firm named by the Ministry of Munitions, and to remain in such employment as long as the War lasted.* He received 7d. an hour or the current rate upon the job, whichever was the highest. He also received children's allowances and subsisting allowance if working away from home. This applied only to unskilled men.

The Trade Card Scheme.

The threat to comb out skilled men aroused the opposition of the engineers, and in November, 1916, they secured a concession, later conceded to most other skilled Unions, by which all skilled men on war work and munition volunteers were given a card of exemption. The system was known as the Trade Card Scheme and was accompanied by the undertaking that all men not previously enrolled as War Munition Volunteers should, on ceasing to be employed on war work, immediately enrol as such. The War Munitions Volunteers Scheme was established in 1915, and legalised under the Munitions Act of 1915. The volunteers had to sign an agreement undertaking to accept employment in making munitions *in any controlled establishment named by the Minister of Munitions, and to remain in such employment during the war for so long as is required.*".

Restricted Occupations Order.

In February, 1917, the Restricted Occupation Order was issued under D.O.R.A. This order forbade employers in specified trades not necessary for the prosecution of war from engaging any workman between the ages 18 and 41. Thus every worker in these trades were put wholly at the mercy of the employer, for whilst the employer could dismiss the workman, the workman could not leave his employment, for he was forbidden to seek employment elsewhere.

Munitions Act, 1917.

All these encroachments upon industrial liberty were received with extreme suspicion by the workers. Unrest was growing all over the country. The operation of the Military Service Acts, the combing out, and dilution, the rise in prices, all aroused profound dissatisfaction. In the spring of 1917, two new measures intensified the unrest, which culminated in the strikes of engineers all over the country in May, 1917.

In April, 1917, a new Munitions Bill was introduced, the main object of which was to extend dilution to commercial work, and to give the Minister of Munitions power to extend the operations of the Munitions Act to any work which he declared, by order, to be work of national importance.

Protected Occupations Schedule.

At the same time the Government threatened a complete reversal of its policy with reference to the combing out of skilled men, and proposed to supersede the Trade Card Scheme, substituting for it a Schedule of Protected Occupations, in which only men in certain specified industries were to be protected from conscription. The Schedule was provisional and subject to modification.

The May Strike, 1917.

This repudiation by the Government of a definite pledge brought matters to a head. Strikes of engineers broke out in the Midlands and spread from centre to centre all over the country. The strikes were repudiated by the leaders, but were carried on by the "unofficial" shop committees, and it was only when the A.S.E. Executive and the Minister of Munitions agreed to negotiate with these committees that work was resumed. Eight ringleaders were arrested, but were released on giving an undertaking that they would abide by the result of the negotiations.

The negotiations dragged on wearily. The men's protest against the withdrawal of the Trade Card Scheme was not upheld, and the Protected Occupations Schedule came into force; but an undertaking was given, as a result of a special conference with the A.S.E., that dilutees would be called on before skilled men. No agreement could be reached on the extended dilution proposal, and finally Mr. Churchill, the new Minister of Munitions, decided to drop the clause, and rushed the Bill through on August 16th.

Leaving Certificates Abolished.

The only decided gain for the men was the promise to abolish the leaving certificates, which finally were abolished by an order on October 5th.

Commission on Industrial Unrest.

Arising out of the engineers' strike, a Commission was appointed to enquire into the causes of industrial unrest, under the direction of G. N. Barnes, once secretary of the A.S.E., and an ex-I.L.P. member. Eight sub-Commissions were appointed, which reported in July, attributing industrial unrest to the following causes:—

High prices.

Dissatisfaction with the Protected Occupations Scheme.

Disparity of wages between skilled and semi-skilled and unskilled.

Delay in arbitrations.

Industrial fatigue.

Leaving certificates.

Dilution.
Conflicting Government orders.
Unequal food distribution.
Bad housing.
Breaking of Government pledges.
Fear that the restoration of Trade Union practices willnot be carried out.
Lack of local and shop organisation for the settlement of grievances.

The Coventry Strike.

In December, 1917, a serious dispute broke out in Coventry. The employers in a certain firm refused to recognise the shop stewards appointed by the men. 50,000 munition workers at Coventry were out for a week, and the strike threatened to assume national proportions. Finally, on an agreement between the Employers' Federation and the Unions to call a joint conference to negotiate the matter on a national basis, work was resumed. Recognition of shop stewards was conceded locally. At this conference an agreement was reached which recognised the individual shop stewards, but did not recognise the Works Committees or provide for joint action between the stewards belonging to the various Unions. It was perhaps for the latter reason that the A.S.E. refused to be a party to the agreement.

Military Service Acts (1 & 2), 1918.

Towards the end of 1917, a new demand was made for man-power, and Lloyd George stated in the House of Commons that the Government wished to withdraw the pledges given to the Trade Unions at the time of the May strike—not to comb out skilled men. Preliminary conferences were held with the Unions, in which the A.S.E. refused to partake, demanding a separate conference, since the pledge was originally given to the engineers. The Government refused and the Military Service Act (November, 1918, was passed. The dissatisfaction of the engineers was increased, and a ballot of members decided overwhelmingly to resist the new measure. The other Unions concerned requested a joint conference with the A.S.E., and it was clear that unrest was becoming daily more acute. In March, 1918, the big German offensive on the Western front began. Of course, it was tremendously boomed by the Government and the Press, and official leaders of the Unions refused to call a strike, and the unofficial movement did not feel strong enough to do so.

A comb-out of 50,000 miners was also consented to by the men. The new measure, therefore, allowed to pass unopposed, to the accompaniment of Ministerial and Press scare stories about the desperate character of the military situation, there was a second call for fresh man-power, and a second Military Service Act was passed with hardly a challenge.

These two Military Service Acts of 1918 comprised the last links in the chain of industrial conscription. The first Act permitted the Director-General of National Service (appointed March, 1917) to issue an order at any time te withdrawing at 14 days' notice any certificate of exemption, whether granted by Tribunal, Government Department, or on occupational grounds. The second Act empowered the King to proclaim that a national emergency had arisen, and to cancel forthwith any and all certificates of exemption, except those granted on the the grounds of conscientious objection or ill-health. Other provisions of the Act included the power to extend the Act, by order, to Ireland, and the extension of the obligation to military service to all men up to the age of 57.

Industrial Conscription Virtually Complete.

With the passing of these two Acts the Minister of National Service had now received powers to direct all men between the ages of 18 and 57 to take up any work to which he cared to assign them, with certain exceptions, as, for instance, men already serving with the Forces, disabled men, and men in holy orders.

In practice, however, these powers could not be easily applied to:—

(a) Men exempted on grounds of health, although they could be subjected to a fresh medical examination, and thereupon come under the direct power of the Director of National Service.

(b) Skilled men exempted under the Protected Occupations Schedule, and not young enough to be combed-out on the excuse of "national emergency."

Since the abolition of the leaving certificates such men had, at least, nominally, free choice of employers.

The "Embargo" Strike, 1918.

This was the full extent to which industrial conscription was introduced. Two further attempts to make it absolute met with such determined opposition that the Government was obliged to drop them.

In June, 1918, the Minister of Munitions published an advance draft for the extension of the Munitions Volunteer Scheme. Under this new scheme it was proposed to make practically compulsory enrolment in the War Munitions Volunteers for skilled workers, and in the War Workers Volunteers for unskilled workers, compulsion was applied by threatening to withdraw their protection from military service from men who refused to enrol.

The purpose of this move was to make labour "mobile," by placing it within the power of the Minister of National Service to direct any worker to, or to transfer him from, any firm or establishment in the country. This was industrial conscription, complete and absolute. The opposition offered by the workers to this proposal was, however, so determined, that it was quietly abandoned.

Baffled in this direction, the Government, nevertheless, adhered to its purpose. It now had recourse to D.O.R.A., under Regulation 8a, of which the Minister of Munitions had power to regulate the engagement or the employment of workmen in munition works. In July, under this regulation, an order was sent to a hundred firms, forbidding them to engage any fresh skilled men.

No previous consultation with the men's Unions had taken place, although the scheme had been communicated to the Trade Union Advisory Board of the Ministry of Munitions.

The men, fearing that the embargo would be extended to make it impossible for any skilled man to change his employment, began to hand in strike notices. The situation assumed so ominous an aspect that Winston Churchill, the Minister of Munitions, at last consented to consult with the Trade Union leaders, and, in the meantime, the strike notices were suspended. The Trade Union officials said that they did not disagree with the principle of the new regulations, but that the embargo should be executed and controlled by local committees representing employers, employed and the Ministry of Munitions.

But the rank and file were entirely opposed to such a scheme, which they knew was certain to work out to their disadvantage, and, whilst the official leaders were negotiating, engineers and toolmakers began to come out in large numbers in Coventry, Birmingham and Manchester, and the movement very soon spread to other branches of the industry and other parts of the country.

Work or Fight.

The Government threatened to cancel the protection certificates of the strikers and to call them to the Colours. The ultimatum, "Work or Fight" was proclaimed as a challenge to the strikers. G. H. Roberts, the Labour Party representative of Norwich and now Minister of Labour, declared:—

"If young men refused to work without substantial or justifiable reasons, then, by the ordinary operations of affairs, they become liable to be impressed into military service."

At the same time, the Government now saw that it was best to make an appearance of being conciliatory to workers willing to be reasonable. It therefore arranged with the Trade Union Advisory Committee to appoint a Commission of Inquiry. On this promise being given, the men were got back.

The Commission of Inquiry reported in September, exonerating the men from blame and suggesting the appointment of an Advisory Committee, with adequate labour representation, to be consulted for all future measures affecting munition workers.

The principle of the embargo was, however, upheld, though never since extended. In theory, therefore, though not fully in practice, industrial conscription was now absolute. The only safeguard now was the explosive condition of labour feeling, and its impatient resistance to all further encroachments.

A few months later the War came to an end; had it continued, there is no doubt, that the logic of events would have produced the inevitable implications of modern warfare, the complete mobilisation of labour for military and industrial purposes.

Throughout the history of the introduction of conscription, the Parliamentary representatives of the Labour Party played no creditable part. The special joint Labour Party and Trade Union Conference, held prior to the introduction of the first Military Service Act, declared against conscription and instructed its representatives to oppose it. In spite of this the Labour Ministers remained in the Government; and the Labour Members of Parliament (with the exception of five I.L.P. members) supported the Bill. This was the case with every succeeding Military Serivce Act.

The position towards the end of the War was roughly as follows: the industrial truce had been turned into a defeat for the workers; enormous profits were being made in shipping, munitions, food and fuel; prices had risen steadily; the worker was overworked and overdriven. He was tied to his industry, and in many cases to his employer, and the threat of military service was held over his head. By the Munitions Act he was deprived of his Trade Union rules and regulations. He was forbidden the right to strike; and for every demand for increased wages, and every protest against his evil condition had to be made in the face of D.O.R.A., the Munitions Acts, and the Military Service Acts.

Labour Shows Signs of Awakening.

In the last period of the war a curious reversal in the status and prospects of labour began to be apparent. Even while the last links of industrial slavery were being rivetted, labour was gathering its forces, both for defence and aggression, in a manner that betrayed an ever-widening breach between it and its Parliamentary and Ministerial representatives. And Labour was becoming popular.

The reasons for this are various. Partly it was due to the disgust caused by the war, and the reaction against it, which even an absolute victory could only momentarily conceal. People were beginning more or less consciously to loath the continued exploitation of their narrowest and most primitive instincts. The delusion of a world made safe for democracy had faded; in its place the workers saw a plutocratic dictatorship wedded to the old order. They began to regard with dismay a Government which countenanced plundering and profiteering, and took advantage of a war abroad to rivet the chains of slavery and militarism at home.

The old political parties had become merged into one arid and unscrupulous coalition, representing commerce and industry. The one force that seemed to stand out in opposition, with the promise of a constructive programme, was Labour, and towards it progressive elements began to turn. The example of the Russian Revolution also furnished a powerful stimulus. Something of the change that had come over Labour was indicated by the strike of the electricians as a counterstroke to the refusal to let the Albert Hall for a labour meeting.

No sooner was the Armistice signed, than the railwaymen gave notice to the Government and to the railway companies that they had withdrawn from the industrial truce. A similar step was taken by the Labour Party at its November conference, when it decided by an overwhelming majority to break the Political Truce, and withdraw the Labour Members from the Coalition Government. Most of the Labour Ministers submitted to this decision with reluctance. Barnes and Roberts presented with the Party ultimatum, decided upon by the delegate conference, elected to sever their connection with the Labour Party, and to cast in their lot with the Coalition for good and all.

Restoration of Trade Union Practice.

Part I. of the Munitions Act, abrogating the right to strike (not always observed during the war) was repealed immediately after the Armistice. It was not until June, 1919, that a Restoration of Pre-war Practices Act was passed, making it obligatory on the owner of every establishment two months after the passing of the Act to restore trade union customs, which had been suspended during the war.

Proceedings under this Act must be instituted by the workers affected, or by Trade Unions. The Government does not make itself responsible for initiating prosecutions. The restoration of pre-war conditions was only made obligatory for one year.

The Shorter Hours' Movement.

The beginning of 1919 witnessed an intensifying of the class struggle. The industrial world seemed to be seething with unrest, and there was a general spontaneous demand for a better condition of life by the workers. Meanwhile there seemed no hope of a substantial reduction in the cost of living. Demobilisation and the slowing down of war work were causing much unemployment, and from every part of the country arose a demand for reduced hours of work without reduction of wages. The main argument for the demand was that the unemployed might, by its means, be absorbed into the industry, but the movement was also partly impelled by a reaction against the excessive over-working of the war period, and the Revolutionary Socialists in the industries were endeavouring to use the situation to take the masses a stage further in the class struggle. The official Trade Union movement was forced also by the general tendency to make demands for reduced hours. Programmes for reduced hours and improved conditions were put forward by miners, railwaymen, transport workers, engineers shipbuilders, cotton operatives, bakers, general labourers, and others.

The Belfast General Strike.

At the close of 1918 and the beginning of 1917 the officials of the unions concerned in the engineering and shipbuilding industries were negotiating for a 47-hour week. The rank and file considered the 47-hour week too long, and in January the Belfast engineering and shipbuilding workers came out on a strike for a 44-hour week. The strike soon became general, and the strike committee virtually controlled the town, issuing or withholding its permits for the supply of gas, electricity, and so on.

The Clyde Strike.

A few days later a similar strike, but for a 40-hour week, began on the Clyde. In Glasgow three days before the strike began there were 29,465 persons unemployed. The engineers and shipbuilders were here also the initiators; but, though less general than in Belfast, the strike spread to many classes of workers, including municipal employees, bakers, carpenters and joiners, builders, railway shop workers, miners, paper workers, gas workers, and many others. Not only were Glasgow and the Clyde involved, but strikes for the 40-hour week sprang out in Edinburgh, Leith, Rosyth, Greenock, Perth, and other places in Scotland, and in Barrow-in-Furness, and other English centres. In the Port of London the shipbuilders struck for a 15/- a week increase; partly to secure the increase, but mainly because they wished to join the strike movement and not to run the risk of being used for work diverted from the ports on strike.

On January 31st, the Clyde strikers held a great demonstration in George's Square, Glasgow; suddenly the Riot Act was read, and the police commenced a baton charge, in which 53 persons were injured. A deputation from the strikers was at the time interviewing the Lord Provost in the City Hall. David Kirkwood, one of the deputation, rushed out on hearing the conflict, and was knocked down and injured by the police. Afterwards, troops were brought into the city, and occupied the City Chambers, with machine guns and fixed bayonets. Tanks and barbed wire were also prepared. Councillor Shinwell, David Kirkwood, William Gallacher and Harry Hopkins were arrested, and imprisoned for their part in the strike.

The National Executives of most of the Unions concerned were hostile to the strikers—therefore, the majority of the workers were without strike pay. The local officials, whilst in many cases opposed to the beginning of the strike, afterwards either supported it, or, at least, refrained from denouncing it. The A.S.E. Executive vindictively dismissed the London, Glasgow, and Clyde District Committees, and Secretaries, and served a notice on Harry Hopkins to vacate, at the end of the month, the Union premises, which he occupied with his family, though it was practically impossible for him to find other accommodation in Glasgow.

From the time of the George's Square baton charge and the arrest of the strike leaders, the strike movement in the North began to flag. It was hoped that the engineering and allied trades in the London area would join the strike, and that there would be a national strike of electricians. The London engineers and the E.T.U. decided, though half-heartedly, to join the strike. The Government replied by issuing a D.O.R.A. order to make it illegal for electricians or any others engaged in important public services. The Transport Workers were appealed to join the strike, but though they were negotiating for reduced hours, they hung back. The miners were also appealed to, but they were negotiating the adoption by their national conference of a Miners' Charter, and declared that they could not act until the charter had been adopted. There was great unrest at this time in the Army and the Navy, but though the more forward of the men in these services desired to act with the industrial workers, combined action was not secured. The railway men obtained an eight-hour day by negotiation. The London tube companies attempted to interpret the excluding the customary half-hour luncheon interval. The tube workers struck, and gained a concession from the tube companies.

Though the London strike had largely failed, the Government arrested and imprisoned David Ramsey and W. F. Watson for inciting speeches.

The acuteness of industrial strike movements had now subsided, but unrest in the Army and Navy continued for many months, and was at one time general and overwhelming. It even spread to the men in the occupied territories of Germany, and other places abroad. The Government was obliged to make numerous concessions to the men, and what was most striking, the military authorities were many times obliged to submit to demonstrations of turbulence without visiting punishment on those concerned.

The wave of turbulence which brought with it the first general strike attempts seen in this country, was in part due to the influence of the Russian Revolution, in part to a reaction against war conditions, in part it was due to economic pressure, and in part also to the awakening consciousness of the British workers, and the growth of Socialist thought amongst them.

The Miners' Charter.

The miners, through whom the general thrill of unrest was also running, in February, 1918, demanded:—

(1) A 30 per cent. wage increase.
(2) A six-hour working day.
(3) Full mantenance at Trade Union rates of mine workers unemployed through demobilisation.
(4) Nationalisation of the mines, with joint control by the State, and the mine workers.

The miners declared their intention to strike to obtain these concessions in full. Nevertheless, having obtained a wages increase they consented to drop the demand made on behalf of the unemployed mineworkers, and accepted a Commission to inquire into the questions of hours and nationalisation.

The power of the Miners' Federation was evidenced by the fact that the Government did not then think a point-blank refusal advisable, and that it pretended, instead, to treat the miners' demands with respect, and gave half the seats on the Commission to men who were called miners' representatives, though some of them were appointed by the Government.

The first Commission reported in favour of a seven-hour working day immediately, and a six-hour working day later, on certain conditions. The Government accepted this Report. The second Commission presented three reports, the Majority report being for a bureaucratic scheme of nationalisation with compensation to the mine-owners. The Government refused to accept this Sankey Report, but the miners failed to carry out their threat to strike, although the threat was many times repeated, and its operations postponed from conference to conference.

In promising to accept the finding of the Commission on Nationalisation, and by making Justice Sankey its chairman, and allowing half the representatives to be those who were, at least, called Labour representatives, the Government had seemed to favour nationalisation of the mines. On December 4th, 1918, during the General Election, Winston Churchill announced that the Government had decided to nationalise the railways and a Government Ways and Communications Bill would have given the Minister of Transport power to take over the railways. The Government was thus prepared, at least, to promise the nationalisation of important public services and key industries to placate labour; but as the unrestfulness of the workers died down, and the general strike threat receded, the mood of the Government changed. It has now taken a determined stand against nationalisation.

The special Trade Union Conference of March having decided not to take action to enforce the claim for mines' nationalisation, the miners have fallen back on a demand for increased wages.

The Railway Strike.

On 26th September, the railway system was brought to a complete standstill by the general strike of railwaymen. The trouble arose in the discussions with the Government concerning the abolition of the special war wage and the fixing of the future wages standards. The locomotive men, by the threat of a strike, had obtained a favourable settlement. The skilled men thus satisfied, Sir Auckland Geddes assumed they would display no concern as to the terms secured by the unskilled men, and made the latter an offer which for some grades would amount to a virtual reduction of 14/- per week. The offer was announced as "definitive," and in face of this the Union declared a general strike, to which the skilled, as well as the unskilled, men unanimously responded. The Government appeared to enter the contest with alacrity, and then revealed that it had been making preparations for strike-breaking so far back as February. These preparations were so elaborately planned as to give rise to the conviction that it was the Government that had declared a lock-out, rather than the Unions a strike. The Transport Workers' Federation called a conference of Trade Unions, which appointed a commission to mediate between the Government and the railwaymen, and declared that in the event of mediation proving unsuccessful owing to the attitude of the Government, they would extend the strike to other services and industries. Meanwhile the active rank and file were impatiently demanding a general strike, and the mediating committee came in for much criticism. The negotiators patched up a temporary peace, which provided for the maintenance of the existng wages scales for another twelve months, a minimum railway wage of 51/- until September 30th, 1920, and in the meantime negotiations were to proceed as to subsequent standardisation. The result of these negotiations were announced in January, 1920. The salient features were an addition of 5/- to the existing war bonus, making a total of 33/-, which was to vary with the percentage increase or decrease of the cost of living —and the fixing of a shop wage of 40/- below which wages are not to fall however much the cost of living decreases. These terms fall far short of the men's expectations, and the unrest on the railways is by no means allayed. The 40/- minimum is the one proposed by the Government last November, and which the men rejected. The January terms were accepted by the negotiations committee by a very narrow majority.

The Moulders' Strike.

The strike of the three ironmoulders' unions comprising 50,000 men, which began in September, 1919, and dragged on for eighteen weeks, was remarkable for the tenacity of the men on strike, and for the callous indifference of the closely allied unions, which, if they had declared a sympathetic strike, would have procured for the moulders the 15/- increase they were demanding within a few days. The strike finally ended with the acceptance by the men of a 5/- increase they had from the first rejected, and the promise of a Government inquiry into foundry conditions.

The Dockers' Enquiry.

The Coal Commission had begun a fashion in such inquiries, and an inquiry into the conditions of the dock workers followed, during which Ernest Bevin, the dockers' representative, declared against a sliding scale of wages to rise and fall with the cost of living, on "a fodder basis."

In the days of our fathers, the fact that such Commissions always ended in nothing had become a byword, so notorious that it was familiar to every man and woman in the street. In these later days of Fabian Labour experts the old fact has been forgotten, and the workers have been told that these inquiries are opening the door to their salvation.

Experience is, however, teaching the workers of to-day that after the Commission has reported the position remains precisely as before; the workers are still faced with the fact that they must either allow their demands to be ignored, or make a fight to secure them.

SOUTHAMPTON BOILEMAKERS' STRIKE.

By Harry Pollitt.

In July, 1915, immediately after the introduction of the Munitions of War Act, the firm of J. I. Thorneycroft, torpedo destroyer builders, of Southampton, introduced six men to perform certain operations connected with boilermakers' work, without these men possessing the necessary qualifications. It was the earliest attempt at dilution in the South, and was as promptly challenged by the boilermakers, who held a mass meeting and gave the firm notice that unless the dilutees were removed within four hours, all work would cease.

The firm agreed to do this, and no attempt was made to re-introduce dilution amongst the boilermakers until September, 1915, when the firm again brought in the same six dilutees. Immediately this was known, all the boilermakers, who numbered about 1,700, left their work at 11 a.m., and refused to commence again until this dilution was stopped.

All attempts to get the men back to work proved a failure, the firm, acting on the instructions of the Ministry of Munitions, refused to remove the dilutees. The Executive Committee of the Boilermakers' Union begged, prayed and threatened the Strike Committee. The Admiralty, through Dr. MacNamara and the Ministry of Munitions, joined in. Veiled threats came from London as to what would happen to the leaders should the men fail to return to work; but the men refused to budge.

Questions were raised in Parliament about the strike, the press was loud in its condemnation of our action.

The firm was interviewed, but refused to remove the dilutees, and the boilermakers would not work with them. A deadlock was reached, and something to appear before Justice Atkins at Winchester, to be tried under the Munitions of War Act.

The usual appeals to patriotism were made and we were told that if we returned to work, the case had to happen, so 45 of the leaders were summoned to appear before Mr. Justice Atkins, at Winchester, to be tried under the Munitions of War Act.

The usual appeals to patriotism were made and we were told that if we returned to work, the case would be dropped.

We refused the offer, and the case was adjourned for two days.

By this time public feeling had been roused against us, especially amongst the soldiers camped around Southampton at the time. When the trial took place in the Bargate, Southampton was in a state of great excitement. Again we were told that if we would only return to work the case would be dropped. Again we refused, and so the trial commenced.

Ernest Bevin, of the dockers, was assessor on the Tribunal for the men's side, and it was largely due to his efforts that the ringleaders got off with a fine of £5 each, coupled with a threat that unless the men returned to work, dire consequences would follow. A midnight meeting of the strikers was held, and it was decided to take a ballot vote as to whether the men should return to work, and the case go to arbitration as soon as a return to work was secured.

The ballot was taken and the result announced at a never-to-be-forgotten meeting in the Woolston Picture Palace. It was decided by a two to one majority to go to work, and so, after a fortnight's fight, the men went back; but what a fight they gave the Government. Mr. J. T. Brownlie and Mr. Moses, the two staunch Labour leaders, were sent down to talk nicely to us. The writer was not allowed to speak, for fear these gentlemen might hear some unpleasant truths, but was asked to move a vote of thanks to Mr. Brownlie, which he did, and which Mr. Brownlie probably remembers as a unique one. However, the strike was responsible for certain modifications in the Dilution Scheme, and it was only in May, 1917, that certain practices were put into operation that would have been carried out in 1915, had it not been for the boilermakers' strike in Southampton. It is interesting to recall that the six dilutees were gradually removed, and the question of dilutees was never raised again so far as the boilermakers were concerned in that particular firm. The fines, amounting to £225, were subscribed by a 10/- levy amongst the men, and outside donations, and thus ended the first big dilution strike in England.

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